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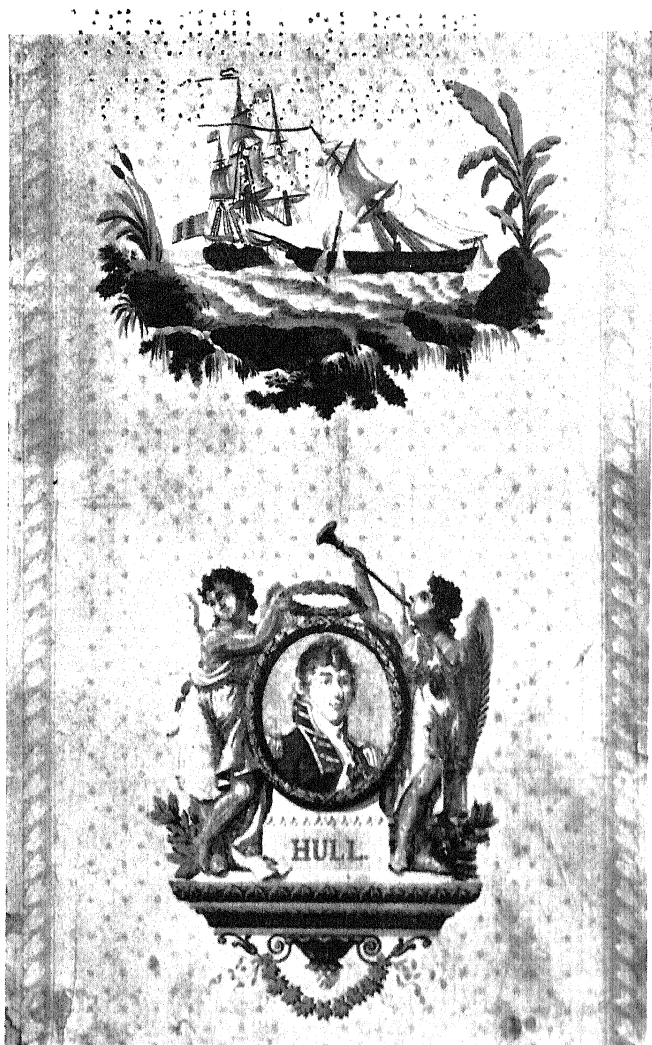


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THE QUEST OF THE QUAIN



Old French wall paper, loaned by Miss Harriet Bryant

BATTLE OF CONSTITUTION AND GUERRIÈRE, 1812
COMMODORE ISAAC HULL

THE
Quest OF
THE *Quaint*

BY
VIRGINIA ROBIE

A
NEW
AND REVISED
EDITION
WITH
ILLUSTRATIONS



LITTLE, BROWN, AND COMPANY

Boston

1927

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TO THE THREE R'S



V. D. R.

T. S. R.

C. W. R.

FOREWORD TO NEW EDITION

FASHIONS in antiques come and go. Last year's hat is not more obsolete than some of the collecting fads of yesterday.

Who could foresee ten years ago, when "The Quest of the Quaint" was first published, that the once despised Currier and Ives prints would make and break records, that everything labeled "Mid-Victorian" would rise up and demand recognition, or that Sandwich glass would crowd out Bristol and Waterford and even dim for the time being the luster of Stiegel?

Who could predict the present "interior desecration"* that calls the period *à la Garfield* old and the household gods of the seventies antique?

Quite recently a collector has advertised for the paper collars of the eighties, pref-

*With gratitude to George Ade.

erably with the original boxes. Nothing is said about the collar button, which probably lies under the black walnut bureau where it rolled some time ago, waiting the inevitable turn of the wheel of fortune.

Arthur True of New York once said, "The trash of one generation becomes the treasure of the next. Gather up the fragments." But even this broad-gauge dealer of the nineties did not dream of paper collars, with or without — or Currier and Ives prints of the vintage of 1887, or wax flowers under glass domes, or tinsel pictures, or valentines later than 1875, or Rogers groups, except as choice bits of contemporary humor. To Mr. True these things were not only impossibly ugly, they were impossibly worthless — and "D" stands for "ducats" as well as "dealer" and sometimes for "discrimination" — that is to say, the dealer sometimes stands for discrimination. In Mr. True's case most decidedly.

His personal collecting turned to the then neglected wares of the eighteenth century with special emphasis on Whieldon ;

his commercial dealings to dark blue Staffordshire of "historical" significance. To him, perhaps, more than to any one person belongs the honor and responsibility of giving vogue to plates and platters depicting American scenes and events. Others too had an active part in the fun and furore, who are now collecting just as ardently — silver or Lowestoft or early American applewood.

That this discriminating dealer, true humanitarian, genial gentleman, did not live to see one of his blue bits bring the interesting price of one thousand dollars, has always been a matter of regret to the embryo collector who located the item in a Connecticut village — a Stevenson platter of the Wall portfolio, proof in every way and of remarkably fine printing. Three years later its companion piece, equally blue, sold at auction for sixty-eight dollars. Probably no collecting fad has ever equaled the meteoric rise of historical blue, its sensational decline and its present substantial, rather undramatic, status. Fine old blue Staffordshire will always be valuable,

but clever forgeries have taken the sparkle off the glaze for many a former devotee.

What will collectors of 1950 laud, treasure and horde? What will fill cupboards and cabinets and the pages of magazines? Where will then be Sandwich and Currier, "South Jersey" and Baxter? Who can say?

Some things will hold. "Silver, linen and fine manners" — if they can be found; Lowestoft, genuine old furniture, no matter which side the Atlantic or what wood, English china and pottery, early American stoneware, good pewter, hand-made brasses and coppers, whether located in Spain or Chicago's Ghetto, samplers not later than 1820, fine glass — fine in line, tone, texture and workmanship, Sheffield of the best period, prints if they stand the acid test of time, and many other articles measuring up to more than the passing whim of the moment; of course old miniatures, fans and snuffboxes and all "upper shelf things", including Molly Saunders' gingerbread of Salem fame; the cream of the "Quaint" as set forth in bandboxes, sil-

houettes, valentines and other adorable things which touch the imagination and the heart, even if leaving the mind unruffled. But the "Quaint" old thing must be one hundred per cent. worth while. Its age alone will not carry it all the way, although a necessary factor.

If anything is dead as a door nail, it would appear to be a book on antiques ten years old — and it will be remembered that the author of the immortal "Carol" tells us that of all nails the door variety is the deadest. Yet my publishers have suggested a new edition, and no author is proof against such flattery.

So the dust is brushed off the band-boxes, the brass candlesticks are polished, the fire in the big chimney lighted, and the copper kettles filled for tea.

Just as the contents of a corner cupboard gathered ten years ago must now be rearranged nearer to the heart's desire, so it is with this book. The main shelves are left intact; the corners are weeded out; naturally the section devoted to glass is entirely emptied. Then the most impor-

tant things are put back, a few articles given away, more sent up attic, a piece or two handed to the junk man, and new acquisitions added. "Chimney Ornaments" and "Colonial Teacups" are removed altogether, really charming old bits, but they must find standing room elsewhere.

The silhouette of Thomas P. Cope by Edouart, illustrated in Chapter II, has been acquired by a descendant of that distinguished Philadelphian, and in his place hangs another Edouart — "Charles Johnson and his son Charles Coit Johnson of Norrichtown, Connecticut", kinsmen of my grandmother and therefore of greater personal interest. This fine double portrait mounted on ivory paper, framed in narrow mahogany and bearing three autographs, shows the French master in his happiest vein, but lacks the decorative background of the valuable Cope. Several notable books on "Silhouettes" have recently appeared and the subject has been greatly enriched by articles appearing in *Antiques* and the *Antiquarian*. These

should not be overlooked by the collector of shadowgraphs.

Elizabeth Bowdoin's cotton print, illustrated on page 172, is still a treasured possession. Only true kin of little Elizabeth will ever capture it. But the dahlia chintz, shown on the same page, has passed into the hands of Nancy McClelland, gifted author of that captivating and important volume, "Historic Wallpapers."

Two collectors mentioned are no longer living — Alexander W. Drake, for years art editor of the *Century*, and Doctor Walter T. Goodale of Saco, Maine, whose old house and contents are described in Chapter VIII. Both were men of the finest type and both did much to foster the ethics of collecting. May their torch be upheld by others.

"Prints — A Pastime" and "Old Wall Papers" replace discarded Chapters, XIX and XXI.

Life in reviewing the first edition of "The Quest" remarked that only the tombstones of our ancestors remain to us. So interesting a suggestion, gratuitously

offered, could not be neglected by a thrifty scribbler. Consequently "The Book of the Weeping Willow", which sounds like a Stuart Walker play, but is much more cheerful, is in the making. In the first chapter is that convincing inscription copied from a leaning slate in Blandford, Massachusetts: "She died from wounds received from inflamed bedclothes supposed to have been set on fire by her candle."

Many of the old epitaphs, notably in the South, are models of terse, beautiful English and all lettering prior to 1800, both South and North, is invariably well drawn. And some day the little book will be ready.

Meantime "The Quest of the Quaint" sets forth once more on its travels. May it find its way to a friendly bookshelf.

V. R.

YARMOUTH, MAINE

June, 1926

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THE QUEST OF THE QUAIN

THE QUEST OF THE QUAIN

CHAPTER I

BANDBOXES

ONE would never think of calling old silver "quaint", nor is fine mahogany brought to mind by the word, but bandboxes, samplers, old needlework pictures, colonial chintz, cottage ornaments, silhouettes and American snuffboxes are well described by it. "Quaint" is not an aristocratic adjective, but a lovable and altogether livable one.

A simple cottage often charms far more than the finest mansion. The latter appeals to the mind; the heart is seriously affected by the cottage. The mansion wins our admiration, the cottage our affections. So it is in the great world of "things." Whether we make a deliberate

choice or not, certain old objects separate themselves into classes appealing in much the same way as the mansion and the cottage.

Individual temperament is, of course, a factor. It would be impossible to interest the collector who specialized in Georgian silver in either bandboxes or samplers. Bandboxes would seem mere pasteboard and paper, and samplers faded old squares of canvas, a bit discolored and probably mildewed. But silver, always beautiful, growing finer every day, unbreakable, unfadable, the very aristocracy of hobbies!

Entirely true, yet consider the keen human interest of the bandbox! Also its decorative quality, likewise its rarity. The latter point needs to be emphasized. To start out on a quest for bandboxes is to set boldly forth on the unknown. The travels of weeks may bring to light warming pans, blue dishes, rush-bottomed chairs and pewter porringers. From the bandbox standpoint, pure and simple, the hunt has been unsuccessful. The gain in other lines has been tremendous, for in no way



EARLY AMERICAN BANDBOXES

does knowledge of human nature increase more rapidly than in the pursuit of mere things.

The bandbox enthusiast is not daunted by a few failures, knowing by collector's instinct that if these much-desired articles do not turn up in the old attics where they justly belong, they will some day be located in the city, under surroundings incongruous and probably whimsical. For such are the unwritten laws of collecting.

And so it was quite to be expected that a day would come when bandboxes of the most delectable kind would be seen by the dozens in a New York auction room. Immediately an excellent reason for the dearth of these old articles becomes apparent. One man had cornered the bandbox.

To speak of Mr. Alexander W. Drake as a collector of bandboxes might imply that he did not collect anything else. But what of those old bottles, gleaming with as many colors as unset gems; those pewter tankards vying with silver in outline and color, those brasses and coppers, gathered

in remote corners of the world; those snuff and patch-boxes of eighteenth century glamor; those silver cups and ladles of Georgian pattern; those engraved pledge glasses with Jacobite mottoes; those old thumb and finger rings from the hands of countless peasants and fine ladies; and those old samplers dating from the day of Mistress Elizabeth Something to little Jane Jones of 1811 — what of those? Certainly volumes could be devoted to them. But at the actual sale, neither the old silver, nor the pewter, the copper, the brass, nor the pledge glasses, nor the finger rings, created the sensations of the band-boxes. The many samplers came second, thus proving that the big audience cared more for the “quaint” than the correctly beautiful or the beautifully correct.

Old objects have their day of high favor, their years of neglect, and their hours of triumph. The hour has arrived for the bandbox. No one will gainsay it, and no one will begrudge it, — surely not after seeing Mr. Drake’s many specimens. The sampler has never been really forgotten.

A few people have always remembered it. To speak of the Renaissance of the sampler is hardly to speak accurately, but the Renaissance of the bandbox — it may be written in red, capitalized, and underscored. The catalogue descriptions of some of these gayly decorated old things make pleasant reading, though a bit tantalizing to those who were unable to purchase.

This catalogue I have found extremely valuable, a ready reference, guide, and friend, and with its assistance at least a dozen unknown specimens have been identified. Therefore, the most important items are repeated here with the belief that they will be found helpful to others. Possibly a real "Hannah Davis," a genuine "Jones' Alley," or an authentic "Tippecanoe and Tyler, Too," may be verified by means of Mr. Drake's references.

"Woman on horseback and man in costume of the period (1820). Old pink and bright green on soft buff ground. Conventional design in white, dull pink, and dark green on blue ground. Early American rural scene. Two figures in a

boat. Pink and green; light buff background. Cover contains label of maker; H. Barnes, Bandbox Manufactory, Jones Alley, Philadelphia. French subject, man and woman, fountain, trees, flowers, pink, brown, green and white on blue ground. Decorative design, man and woman in costume of the day with a basket of fruit curiously out of proportion. Soft pinks and olive green on canary yellow.

“Woman on horseback. Pink, brown and white on blue ground. Lined with newspaper dated 1840, with portraits of Harrison and Tyler as candidates for President and Vice-President. Country landscape with Church, houses and trees. Oriental subject with camels, temples and people in Oriental costume. Pink, dark green and white on blue ground. Views of Gallipoli, showing shipping, soldiers and architecture. Gray and brown, with bits of bright red and blue in uniforms. Early American subject with figures, log cabin and cider barrel, typical of Harrison’s (Hard Cider) Campaign — ‘Tippecanoe and Tyler, Too.’ Dull green, red and white

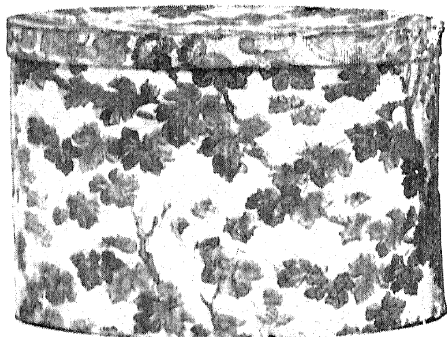
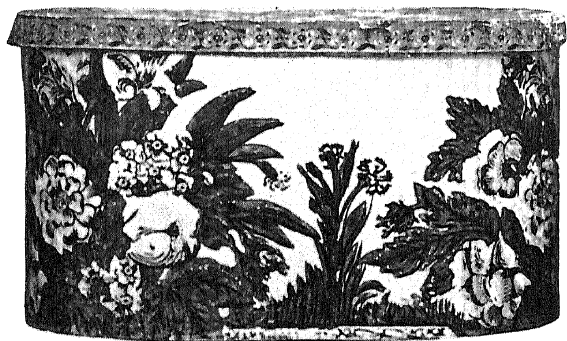
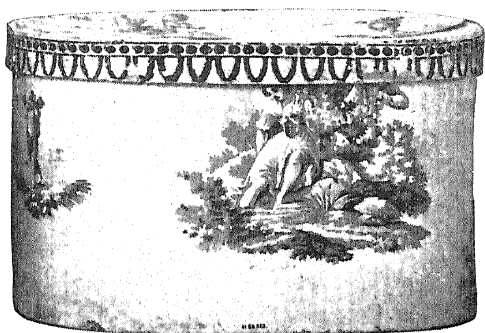
on blue background. Conventional design of flowers and foliage in white and yellow on light blue ground. Cover lined with New York newspaper dated 1842. Contains advertisement offering half-cent reward for return of farmer's runaway apprentice.

“English hunting scene, with men, horses and dogs in landscape. Dull pink, black and yellow on blue ground. Figures in English and Turkish costumes, with landscape. Cover contains maker's label; Thomas Day, Jr., Bandbox Manufactory, 369 Pearl Street. Early American subject. Clayton's Balloon Ascent, with landscape. Soft pink and brown on canary yellow ground. Spread eagle with ribbon, showing maker's label and palm branches. Putnam's Bandbox Manufactory, Hartford, Connecticut. Fanciful design of girl driving. Repeated in medallions. Wooden, lined with Concord (N. H.), newspaper dated 1827; also contains label of maker; Hannah Davis, Jaffrey, N. H. New York subject. View of the Deaf and Dumb Asylum which stood at Fiftieth Street and Madison Avenue — afterwards site of

Columbia College. Decorative design of squirrels in dull pink and brown on canary yellow ground. Decorative design of peacocks in dull pink, red and white on blue ground. Pastoral scene. Two figures in row-boat. Soft pink, white and green on blue ground. Box lined with Lancaster, (Pa.) newspaper dated 1831. Contains notice that Mr. Jefferson is fitting up a theater in Chestnut Street in a neat and tasteful manner."

It will be seen that bandboxes present many phases, and that a large assortment has almost the variety of a blue Staffordshire collection. The historical specimens are most valuable, although some of the purely decorative ones have the greatest charm. It is quite simple now — the lack of these articles in old New England attics. By what magic, black or white, they were secured lies beyond this brief chronicle.

Mr. David Belasco and a representative from the Metropolitan Museum were the largest buyers of the bandboxes, the samplers, the old needlework pictures, and the printed chintz. Mr. Belasco was inter-



Metropolitan Museum of Art

BANDBOXES FROM THE DRAKE COLLECTION

ested in the bottles, and so was Mr. Francis Wilson. The printed handkerchiefs also brought high prices. A needlework pastoral picture in *petit point* sold for fifty-two dollars and fifty cents, while an early American sampler rose by slow bids to eighty dollars.

Some of the sampler figures were as follows: Lydia Tallman's sampler, New Bedford, 1808, fifty dollars; Abigail Ridgway's sampler in tapestry colors, 1795, sixty dollars; an English ship sampler, forty-two dollars and fifty cents (Mr. Belasco), and a most attractive American sampler, by Lydia Stockton for the same price; Ann Newbold's houses, trees, and verses, forty-five dollars.

Speaking of finger rings, four lie before me; one of gold and tiny pearls, another with a clear green stone, and the third an interesting puzzle ring, the fourth a beautiful filigree trifle; and the sum paid for the four did not equal the price paid for Ann Newbold's green trees and crooked verses, nor for one of the historical bandboxes.

My own quest for bandboxes began many

years ago when spending a summer in a New Hampshire village. At that time Hannah Davis was an unknown name to me, and the word "historical" suggested neither pasteboard nor china. But old things were beginning to gravitate in my direction, and one June morning I made an inventory.

Item: one powderhorn

Item: one pewter teapot

Item: one flowing blue bowl

Item: one tin candle mold

Item: one perforated tin lantern

Item: one glass butter plate

Truly a mixture, and in the light of later collecting, rather amusing. However, no collector of ancient firearms was half so proud as I in the possession of the powderhorn, and the rarest blue Hawthorn is not more beautiful in my eyes to-day than was that old bowl.

One day, my assortment of the queer and the quaint was increased by the gift of a foot stove, and the dear old soul who gave it to me sent it in a handbox! And that was the beginning.

Of course, the foot stove had a history, though so well kept and trimmed and burning did it look that I knew its record would be comparatively brief; but the bandbox, if wear and tear counted for anything, suggested something out of the ordinary. Faded green and pink, yellow and black, in an old-time landscape design, brought visions of stage coaches and ladies in large bonnets, little girls in pantalets, and small boys dressed like "Rollo."

The next afternoon found me knocking at the door of the bandbox house on the other side of the village green, or, in the words of the older inhabitants — the "Parade." Now, the dwellings of this adorable village, which, like Eugene Field's favorite antique shop in New Orleans, must not be too definitely located, were all of the dear old story-book type, — white clapboards, green blinds, and nice old doorways. In lilac time there were lilacs everywhere, and in rose time, roses — and one old house had a peony garden, and another a sundial, and a third a well-sweep, and a fourth a high cedar hedge. The band-

box house stood far back from the street and had the distinction of a third story. Within dwelt Miss Sarah Pratt, the last of her generation, a vigorous, capable individual who neither looked nor felt her eighty summers. The daughter of a County Judge and of a family well known in affairs of town and State, she had for many years been the village oracle. The history of every family from the early settlers down was as an open book to her. She knew every branch and twig on her own family tree, and those of everybody else. On more than one occasion I had passed a profitable hour in the Pratt parlor, and I now knew that I would not be disappointed.

I can still see that prim, orderly room, rather dark from closed blinds and rather musty from closed windows, and still hear the pleasant staccato voice of Sarah Pratt. Even the dim outlines of her high-back chair and the hard, slippery seat of the old haircloth sofa come back vividly. And here is the bandbox monologue :

“What a pity I didn’t keep Mary Ellen’s bandbox for you. You might have it

just as well as not. It was as good as new. No, the one I gave you was just an old thing — no earthly good to anybody. Knowing you were so crazy about ancient things, I thought I would put the foot stove in it instead of just wrapping it up in plain ordinary newspaper. Now I like new clean things and always did. Mary Ellen's had ships on it and an island and little boats, and on the cover was a bridge, — but I gave it last summer to little Mary Ellen Kittridge. She wanted it to make a house for her doll, and she just wouldn't take anything else. No, she's not a mite of relation. She's the minister's little girl, and you know you can't refuse minister's children as you can ordinary people's. Then we have always set great store by her name. Her grandmother on her father's side went to the Academy with Mary Ellen, that's how she happened to be named for her. Now perhaps Mary Ellen Kittridge would just as leave give it back. She's a nice child, though set, like all the Kittridges. The bandbox I gave you has been up in the attic for years. Now, Mary

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Ellen's I always kept in the spare room. Mary Ellen kept her first bonnet in it. Yes, I remember the bonnet. It was white leghorn with a wreath of pink roses inside the brim and long blue ribbons. She looked pretty as a picture in it. I had a new bonnet at the same time. It was my second, and we wore them first to church. Mine was like Mary Ellen's, only the wreath was of white roses, and the ribbons green and the crown was beaded in crystal beads. Mine cost the most and was considered the handsomest, although both were very stylish. Mary Ellen was engaged soon after that, and we always thought it was the bonnet. I can't remember what my bandbox was like, but both came from Fitchburg and they must have been the same size, for the bonnets were just alike in shape.

"Strange, when your mind gets started how you will think of things! My brother, Alonzo, had one of those Fitchburg boxes for his stove-pipe hat. Not one member of our family set more store by clothes than Alonzo. Twice a year he went to Boston,

and his neckties, canes, and hats were the best Boston could supply. I wish I could find that old beaver hatbox. It was a different shape from our bonnet boxes. The date, you say? Well, Mary Ellen was married in '46, but she and William Henry were engaged four years. It would have been longer, if it hadn't been for his uncle out in Iowa giving him a place in his law office. It was a sad wedding with the thought of Iowa in our minds. You may not believe it, but when young Mary Ellen went to the Philippines with her soldier husband last year, it didn't seem one bit farther than Iowa did in '46. In some ways it didn't seem so far. Yes, we kept up the name. Mary Ellen's two girls were named Ellen and Mary. Then Mary named her daughter Ellen, and Ellen named her daughter Mary. I hoped one would be named 'Sarah' after Mother, to say nothing of its being my name. Now young Ellen writes her name 'Aileen', and little Mary writes hers 'Marie' — so one might just as well have been Sarah. Then, my grandmother's name, 'Cynthia

Thompson!’ I was always sorry that Mary Ellen’s oldest daughter wasn’t named ‘Cynthia.’ It was Cynthia Thompson’s foot stove that I gave you. As far back as I can remember, that foot stove was taken to meeting every Sabbath morning. You know the Pratt pew, fifth to the right on the center aisle. Well, that foot stove provided coals for half the other foot stoves, so Grandmother Thompson used to tell me. It kept burning all through Doctor Dillingham’s sermons, and you know what sermons were in those days. Three times Joel Bennet, the sexton, turned the hourglass. I tell people they ought to think about those old times when they talk about Mr. Kittridge’s long sermons. I have always said that next to being a minister’s wife, I’d hate most to be a minister.

“Yes, I knew you would appreciate that foot stove. You see, Alonzo died a bachelor, and I shall *probably* die an old maid, and what with Aileen in the Philippines and Marie still at school, I feel that I can give away a foot stove or a handbox. Well, it’s too bad about my not remember-

ing where your bandbox came from. I know it was never mine, and it couldn't have been Mary Ellen's, or I would remember. There was something about Mary Ellen and all of her things you couldn't forget. Some folks are that way. But there is a bandbox in this house that some day I'll show you. It belonged to my mother, and it was made by a woman in Jaffrey on the other side of the ridge, and her name was Hannah Davis. She was well known in these parts. She and her daughter used to drive through the country selling bandboxes. I knew of five in this town, but the one in our spare room closet is the best of the lot. There's a church and little house and a man on horseback. You come next Tuesday about three o'clock and stay to tea, and I'll bring down the bandbox, and maybe there'll be something else I could show you. You've been real good to talk to me all this time. Be sure and come early Tuesday, and I shouldn't be at all surprised if I gave you the bandbox Hannah Davis made, you set such store by old things."

And the end of this particular story is that little Mary Ellen Kittridge was charmed to exchange Mary Ellen's band-box for a new doll's house, and it now stands between the Hannah Davis box and a battered disreputable thing, without name or history, which once enclosed Cynthia Thompson's foot stove.

CHAPTER II

THE RETURN OF THE SILHOUETTE

"SAT today for my portrait" runs a line in an old diary. "For the first time I was afraid of my shadow."

To a generation unfamiliar with the snap shot, the silhouette must have seemed painfully realistic. In comparison with the miniature and the oil portrait, it was direct and at times unflattering. Yet the art flourished, and "shadowgraphs," as they were originally called, had a great vogue. To-day they are scarce enough to make collecting interesting and decidedly worth while.

Old miniatures are costly, but silhouettes, unless the rarest examples be desired, may be purchased at comparatively moderate rates. And how well these charming things in black and white fit into the new-old

room; preferably one's great, great grandfather in queue and lace ruffles over the old desk, and one's great aunt in the costume of 1830 hung just above it, or, better still, some quaint little kinswoman, aged five or six, in pantalets and pinafores. Lacking these, several picturesque unknowns picked up in unexpected places make an excellent beginning.

My own small collection divides my affections with my bowls and my hand-boxes and probably gives far more pleasure to friends. The human interest of the silhouette is at once apparent, while the spectacles of George III would be needed by some people in order to see the fascinations of old bowls and boxes.

My first silhouette was a full length portrait of Thomas Cope, Esquire, of Philadelphia by August Edouart, and its purchase was a happy accident. I was hunting old maps in a little bookshop on Beacon Hill, well known for its rare prints, autographed letters, etc. Once an engraving in color by Paul Revere hung in the window! One never could tell what might

happen. I liked the Philadelphia gentleman in tall hat and long coat, although the date affixed to the signature, 1843, was rather late for keenest enthusiasm; moreover I preferred heads rather than full length silhouettes and a costume more picturesque than that of the middle of our own nineteenth century. But the figure was very well done, and the elaborate garden background in pencil quite out of the ordinary. The garden suggested Versailles and gave an imaginative touch in humorous contrast with the brisk and altogether American subject. So the 1843 silhouette joined an old map of Boston harbor, a battered "Geography of the Heavens" and a bound volume of *Godey's Magazine* for 1865, the latter fairly alive with fashion plates in color. And that was the beginning.

To-day Thomas Cope has a place in my regard second only to that of Queen Victoria by Miers. The royal lady is shown riding in Hyde Park, and the date is 1845. A youthful sovereign it is and a very charming one. The work of Miers

affords an interesting contrast with that of Edouart. The Englishman used India ink touched up with gold; the Frenchman, scissors and a pencil. The details of the Queen's costume are in gold, so are the trappings of the horses, while conspicuous on the saddle are the initials "V. R." True to the period is the horse with flowing mane, long tail, and arched neck; true, too, are the long habit and the plumed hat. This interesting specimen was the gift of an English friend and gave a new impetus to enthusiasm. But for the youthful Victoria, my silhouette collecting might have stopped with Thomas Cope. With her arrival one or two things seemed necessary; either to go on silhouetting with some seriousness of purpose, or to build up a different kind of collection around the royal rider; adding a jubilee pitcher, and a fine old luster bowl showing the Queen in her bridal veil with the Prince Consort at her side.

Realizing how things "flock" when you once get started, I knew that the "Victorian" scheme would hum merrily. The



AUGUST EDOUART'S SILHOUETTE OF
THOMAS P. COPE

first old shop entered would probably contain a print of John Brown and the Queen, or something else so entirely pat that possession would be instantaneous. Visions of tureens of every known form filled my mind, silver soup ladles, covered butter dishes, Eastlake furniture. No! "Victorian" was not a magic word. It might become so in another fifty years but too soon, far too soon, to go in — mind, heart, and soul — for mid-nineteenth century things!

The unexpected find of an American silhouette of a charming child, unnamed, unsigned, and undated, seemed to settle the matter. Then came the great event — three thousand and more silhouettes in one New York gallery, silhouettes covering the walls, filling portfolios, signed, dated, sometimes carrying the autographs of the sitters, all the work of one man, and that man — August Amanst Constance Fidèle Edouart, none other than the maker of my Philadelphian.

Up to this time my knowledge of Edouart could be summed up in a few words; born

at Dunkirk in 1788, settled in England in 1815, made many distinguished portraits, came to America in 1839; but now the life history of this remarkable artist was at hand, together with an astonishing number of his portraits.

How did it happen that so many examples could be found at this late day and gathered together under one roof? The question might well be asked, although the answer is rather simple. The ten years August Edouart spent in America, 1839-1849, were busy ones. He was then at the height of his fame and so rushed with orders that engagements had to be made weeks in advance. No photographer of our day is half so popular as was this silhouettist of French birth and English prestige. A list of his patrons forms a "Who's Who" of the "forties", a "Social Register" of wit, beauty, and fashion. In New York, Boston, and Washington he met with great success, while his studio at Saratoga Springs, the Newport of that day, proved a mecca for the summer colony, as well as floating tourists. Some of the most

interesting examples of his work in America were made at this famous watering place.

With a method not always joined to the artistic temperament, Edouart cut every portrait in duplicate, keeping one copy for himself. When possible, he secured an autograph, adding the year, the day of the month, the place, and any other interesting detail at command. Thanks to this rare combination of talent and system, the big New York exhibition was possible. The three thousand and six hundred specimens shown represented a complete record of his American tour.

Where, one is tempted to ask, are the mates to this wonderful three thousand, six hundred? Strewn to the four winds or to the four corners of this big country? In family treasure boxes, attics, old book-shops! Who can say. Could they be assembled together, they would doubtless afford an interesting study in backgrounds. Edouart was famous for his interiors and when possible liked to pose people in their own houses. What a graphic picture we would receive of the household art of the

forties — a rather hazy period in the minds of most of us. We can but regret that Edouart, careful workman that he was, did not add backgrounds to his own personal set, thus giving us as perfect a record of household art as he has of costumes.

Back of the big New York exhibition is a story, the facts of which sound like a romance. Full of honors and somewhat richer in this world's goods Edouart returned to London on board the *Oneida*, a small southern vessel loaded with cotton. Off the coast of Guernsey, in a furious gale, the boat foundered, and the twenty-six passengers narrowly escaped death — but the precious silhouettes were saved. Our friend August was taken to the house of a man named Lukis, where he remained until able to continue his journey. Out of gratitude for the kind treatment received, he presented Fredericka Lukis, daughter of his host, with the entire American series. From a grandson of Fredericka, the collection was purchased by Mrs. F. Nevill Jackson of London, still intact and carefully preserved, and from her it was secured

by Mr. Arthur T. Vernay of New York, who made all lovers of silhouettes his debtor by placing the complete set on exhibition. It was Mr. Vernay's first intention to offer the collection *en bloc* to one of our big museums, but the private sale gave to Americans of this generation a greater opportunity. Not only could the work of the most distinguished silhouettist of his day be studied in a more intimate way, but family portraits could be purchased by hundreds of people. It was interesting and highly diverting, this locating of grandfathers and grandmothers, great-uncles and great-aunts, to say nothing of the pleasure of seeing presidents, diplomats, artists, musicians, the great and the near great.

A charming woman more than eighty years of age to whom I carried a catalogue located over twenty of the friends of her father and mother and four members of her own family. The army and navy silhouettes interested her most. "My eldest sister danced with General Macomb at her coming out in Washington," she

said, "and Winfield Scott was often a guest at my father's house." Then followed a delightful series of reminiscences, anecdotes, and descriptions of balls, tea parties, garden-fêtes, etc., beginning with her memories as a child and coming down to her own girlhood of the decade following Edouart's visit.

The exhibition inspired many people to dip into family history, hunt up old letters and genealogies, and to get posted generally on the forgotten forties. Not the least important phase of the Edouart revival was the general interest created in the craft of silhouette making. Many collections were made the richer thereby, while a number of people will undoubtedly date the beginning of their interest from that occasion.

Of the distinguished artists whose work will sometimes reward the quest of the collector may be mentioned Field, Pearce, and Foster. Unlike Edouart, they made no American tours, although Americans in London probably sought their services.

It is known that Abigail Adams visited

the studio of Patience Wright in 1785 and described her as "a gifted artist but a shockingly untidy woman." Mrs. Wright had a tremendous vogue in the last decade of the eighteenth century, and anything from her hand may be well considered a prize. She worked with a sharp pair of scissors, chatting continually, sometimes making a family group, sometimes an intricate fruit and flower piece. Wax profiles were also modeled by her and colored by an ingenious method of her own. She lived when the silhouette was the rage of the hour, when albums were filled with portraits in black and white, even as the plush album of hideous memory was later filled with photographs; when clever amateurs were "cutting each other" with more or less skill, and when the gentle craft was taught in fashionable schools for young ladies, together with music, manners, needlework, and French.

Rosenberg belongs to this picturesque day, and several English collections, notably the Wellesley, are rich in examples of his work. His studio at Bath, whither

he went for the season, was the objective point of the beaux and belles of the late Georgian period. We get the picture, even if a little blurred, — powdered hair, lace ruffles, shoe buckles, and sedan chairs. Very charming are the portraits by this artist, whose methods were quite unlike those of Mrs. Wright, Edouart, and others. He was a painter of profiles rather than an expert with the scissors. On the convex side of a clear glass, a head was sketched in black paint and later protected by a thin sheet of wax or plaster. The wonder is that so many of these fragile things have lasted until this day, perfect in every detail and with the word "Bath" still faintly visible.

The collector of silhouettes soon learns to make many distinctions and to tell at long range whether black paper or India ink has been used. He recognizes the work of Hubard of the early Victorian period by his lavish use of gold, that of Pearce by his vellum backgrounds, and that of Rosenberg and his followers by their glass mounts and painted profiles, that of Patience

Wright by, her own peculiar methods, and so on and on.

Hubard and Pearce usually signed their portraits, as did Miers, Jordan, and Foster. American silhouettes are often unsigned and undated. Here a knowledge of costumes is a great aid in placing the period. Oval backgrounds and oval frames sometimes indicate old specimens. Another early style of frame is seen in the square panel of wood or pasteboard enclosing an oval or a circle upon which the portrait is shown. Full length figures, except in groups, usually belong to the nineteenth century. The silhouettes of the eighteenth century suggest the miniature; feet were often ignored, and hands seldom appeared. For real beauty, the profiles of the eighteenth century stand supreme; for quaintness, those of the early nineteenth century lead.

Edouart has his own particular place, perhaps the finest draftsman of all the men who attempted the "shadowgraph." He scorned the use of gold in order to add interest. Black was black, and white was

white, and he knew how to draw hands and feet with consummate skill. But with the Edouarts, some of the earlier and more imaginative portraits should be included. One charming style depicts the face of the sitter solidly black and the accessories in a neutral wash of paint. Wigs, laces, caps, and hats are wonderfully effective thus treated.

Another, and rare type, shows a white or ivory colored margin from which the portrait has been cut away. Mounted on black, the effect is that of the ordinary silhouette, until a close examination reveals the fact that the usual process has been reversed. Examples of this character are very scarce, sometimes dating back as far as 1720. They may truly be called "shadowgraphs", as the term "silhouette" did not exist until Étienne de Silhouette became Minister of France under Louis XV in 1759. While the finding of a real shadowgraph is not an everyday probability, it would be a bold prophet who would predict that one could not be secured.

Of women silhouettists, Patience Wright

is best known, but Mrs. Lightfoot of Liverpool and Mrs. Beetham of Buxton produced a number of very interesting portraits. Mrs. Lightfoot was a contemporary of Mrs. Wright; Mrs. Beetham's day was a little later.

To Mr. Vernay I am indebted for the perusal of one of Mrs. Lightfoot's advertisements pasted on the back of a silhouette. — "Perfect likeness in miniature profile taken by Mrs. Lightfoot, Liverpool, and reduced on a plan entirely new which preserves the most exact symmetry and animated expression of the features much superior to any method. Time of sitting, one minute. N. B. Those who have shades by them may have them reduced and dressed in present taste. All orders will be punctually dispatched."

Mr. Foster of Derby, over the date January 1, 1811, announced to the public his newly invented machine for the making of profiles in a manner absolutely precise in resemblance, five shillings and upwards. Mr. Foster, who seems to have had a short cut to silhouette-making, also adver-

tised that the machine would make a complete etching in copper plate from which many copies could be run. A silhouette made from a copper plate would make an interesting novelty in a collection, though lacking the one thing that makes a silhouette so attractive — its personal appeal.

German silhouettes are interesting, though more difficult to find in this country than English. The addition of color makes some of these old things very effective. The elaborate groups, where brilliant colors have been used in the costumes, are as striking as some of the modern Futurist illustrations. A few such specimens give variety, rounding out a collection. But it is in our own country and of our own country that the happiest hunting ground will be found.

Several Americans achieved marked distinction with the scissors. Charles Wilson Peale, the painter, should be mentioned first, although the work of Samuel Powell, also of Philadelphia, ranks very near it. Salem, as might be expected, produced several clever exponents of the black art,

among the number, Bache and Joyce. The former invented a machine for cutting known as "Bache's patent." Other signatures unearthed at long intervals are Polk, King, Doyle, Williams, Bowen, Brown and the two Doolittles.

Patience Wright should have special interest for us. She was born in this country in 1725, and married Joseph Wright, a Quaker, in 1772. Her success with silhouettes here led her to seek a wider field in London, where greater gains could be secured. It was a case of seeking English shillings, not American dollars. Not only was she highly successful with her work, but she married off her daughter to one of the foremost artists of his time, John Hoppner. The portraits she made before she went abroad are now extremely valuable.

Hubard, the English youth, came to Boston at the zenith of his powers and opened a studio near the Exchange Coffee House. Fortunately, his work is clearly marked. Field, at one time partner of Miers, planned an American tour but abandoned the proj-

ect. His use of gold was particularly interesting, and he treated costumes in a most elaborate manner. It is to be regretted that the beaux and belles of Boston, Philadelphia, New York, and other cities could not have posed for him.

In the quest for silhouettes, the unknown and unidentified will predominate. Few will belong to that century of romance and powdered hair, the eighteenth. Anything earlier than 1820 may be considered "old," while many of the most interesting specimens will range through the picturesque thirties and the forgotten forties.

CHAPTER III

A BOX OF OLD VALENTINES

IN the forgotten forties, flowers were "posies" and letters "missives." People wrote of "ringlets" and "tresses", never of "hair." No one *cried*, although enough "tears were shed" to drown the heroines of the day. It was the age of romance, but romance on stilts. The autograph album and the daguerreotype flourished. Gift books were weighted with such titles as "Gems of Thought", "Friendship's Garland", and the "Casket of Pearls." Repository was a popular word. There were the "Young Lady's Repository"; the "Housewife's Ready Repository", and "The Repository of Fancy Work and Fashion." What was home without a whatnot, or the parlor without a black walnut center table?

Where are the gift books, the family daguerreotypes, the treasured copies of *Godey's Magazine*? Where is the lamp with dangling prisms? Where are the wax flowers, the painted velvet fruit-piece, the cross-stitch picture, the decalcomania and the china dog? Have the historians of our artistic progress stopped at 1830 only to take up the thread after the centennial?

Of the despised seventies we have a clearer record. We do not ask where the Rogers group, the painted snow shovel, and the gilded rolling pin have flown. Our humorists have immortalized them. Moreover the steel engravings in black frames, the cold, slippery haircloth furniture, the fringed tidies, the beaded table mats, the highly colored chromos of children perpetually going to sleep and waking up — these things many *rather* youthful folk remember — even as you and I. But the unrecorded forties — we neither take them humorously as we do the seventies, nor seriously as we do the twenties. We ignore them entirely unless we happen to collect the silhouettes of Edouart, the

fading daguerreotypes, the worsted samplers or the scarce valentines. The day of the sampler was nearly over, that of the valentine at high noon.

There have been valentines since the beginning of time. When Adam presented Madame Eve with a flower, *that* was a valentine. Ben Jonson's "Drink To Me Only With Thine Eyes" is a valentine, and so is Edmund Waller's "Go, Lovely Rose, Tell Her That Wastes Her Time And Me . . . etc." The Elizabethan poets were the greatest of valentine makers — next to the writers of love letters. And a valentine which is not confined to one day in the year has a tremendous advantage.

Homemade valentines dating back to the early eighteenth century are sometimes located, but those of the early nineteenth are scarce enough to be highly valued. The rise of the printed valentine gradually crowded out the handmade variety, except with a few original individuals who preferred to follow, unaided, the romantic muse.

The seeker after old printed specimens, if he makes this country his hunting ground, will not find many of a date earlier than 1830. While far from antique, the valentines of the forties are quaint and naïve, and a most interesting contribution to the early Victorian period.

In this particular "Box of Valentines" — not a collection, for it is hardly large or important enough for that — are a number of homemade specimens of varying artistic skill, — a few which have been identified by the costumes as belonging to the period of the French Empire and a dozen or more of the decade 1840-1850.

The appeal of the old valentine is out of all proportion to its actual value. Without a scrap of intrinsic worth, it fascinates far more than many costly things. I have yet to find any one who is not keenly interested for the passing moment when brought face to face with any specimen earlier than 1860.

The oldest one in the Box bears the date 1802, and is folded and sealed after the manner of the letters of that day. It

shows the writer to have been a good rhymster and clever penman. In an elaborate pen and ink border made up of intricate flourishes are two doves and the fair one's name enclosed in a wreath of roses.

A fellow-collector tells me that she owns a valentine dated 1811, which begins: "Beloved, Meldora, But I adore her." For high-flown sentiment and rickety rhythm, it would be hard to surpass these fervid valentine-letters. Unless some remote member of your own family was farseeing enough to produce one, your own collection will probably lack this particular kind.

There are four valentines in the Box which represent a pleasing blend of the manufactured and the individual. One is herewith reproduced. It has an embossed border in a simple trellis design, gray on white. Thus far it is shopmade. Within the border, and filling most of the background, is a vase of flowers cut from painted paper and pasted on with much ingenuity. The dark blue vase is in "Chinese style", while the flowers are gayer than

any which ever grew on English soil. Two strawberry blossoms, a rose, a tulip, and a morning glory are neatly grafted on one stem. Written in violet ink, in an old-fashioned hand, are the words, "Constancy and Love." No publisher's name is to be found, but a more elaborate example of the same scheme carries the imprint, "Kershaw, London", cleverly concealed in an embossed border of roses, shells, and garlands.

Two others from Kershaw's have wreaths of flowers within similar borders. One has forget-me-nots tied with crimson ribbons. The other, pink and yellow roses tied with blue. Truly a bit gay, but the vivid green of the leaves carries the scheme. A silver dove hovers over the forget-me-nots, which are further embellished by vines and tiny leaves painted directly on the paper. Baskets of flowers in silver add interest to the rose garland, under which runs the couplet in fading ink: "Forget me not where 'ere you be, And I will ever think of thee." The embossed border of fuchsias is very delicately handled,

sharp and clear, and shows the careful execution of this big London stationer.

George Kershaw, in company with others in England and America, sold embossed sheets of this style to be filled in later as the purchaser fancied. Consequently valentines of this class present a wide variety. Sometimes long verses fill the center, occasionally bars of music, again something more ambitious is attempted in the way of an original drawing in crayon or water color. For quaintness, the cut-out style described takes the lead.

From the same little shop where I found my first silhouette came the four Kershaws. One memorable day in early January, the window of this place of surprises fairly blossomed with valentines. Who can say that we are an unromantic nation? During five weeks of steady rain that window was surrounded with umbrellas. There seemed no end to the interest in those adorable old bits of paper which the proprietor had brought back the summer before from an English trip and cannily kept till the first of the year.

I have no doubt that there are many left, tucked away on shelves. If Captain Cuttle could come back from Dickens-land he might say, "Make note of."

A favorite in the Box is a Scotch valentine, folded like a sheet of sermon paper and measuring ten by eight inches. There is something a bit solemn about this old thing. Waller's "Go, Lovely Rose" printed in full in finest copperplate is true to the sentiment of the forties, but the motto in the border sounds like a sampler: "Beneath Religion's Cloudless Sky, the Virtues Bloom, The Vices Die." Possibly the publishers, B. F. Lloyd and Company of Edinburgh, sought to temper the poet's lines by the severity of the motto, or to soften the motto by the beauty of the verses. At any rate this valentine was very popular in the late forties, reaching the importance of a third printing. A charming feature is a wide border in colors, enclosing the verses as with a frame. There are bluebells and roses, lilies of the valley, cornflowers, wheat, and ferns. Fairies and gnomes are swinging in the

roses and ringing the bluebells. The English flag and a Scottish banner connected by heraldic ribbons are upheld by two gnomes. Quite festive is this sheet of paper in spite of the motto. The name of the artist, Adolph Schroder, and that of the engraver, F. Schenk, are plainly written in the margin. If the American makers of valentines had been as considerate as the English and Scotch in this matter of signatures, much interesting information would be at hand. As with American silhouettes, the costumes are of timely aid. The character of the type, size of the paper, and the way the color is used are also helpful guideposts.

The names of some of the publishers whose work may be definitely located, beside Kershaw and Lloyd, are Park, Dobbs, Gilks, Marks, Peck, and King.

A. Park, 47 Leonard Street, London, made quantities of valentines about the time of Queen Victoria's marriage, so true to the costume of the period that they are easily recognized. One in the Box shows a room opening on a balcony beyond which

is a lake, dotted with islands. On the wall hangs a portrait of a robust gentleman not unlike the Prince Consort. Cupid with bow and arrow is about to pierce the heart of a sentimental damsel with long ringlets and impossible, small waist. Around the portrait is draped a heavy festoon of velvet with gold fringe held in place by a dove. Cupid's wings will never carry him very far, although the lady with ringlets is entirely willing.

Two verses, quite in character with the picture, run as follows :

Give me a feeling, faithful heart !
Perfection's richest prize.
This is the temple of all Love,
Where beauty never dies.

Yet! If thy heart is still the same,
Still gentle as of yore,
Then thou art beautiful to me
More lovely than before.

Of full twenty specimens signed "A. Park" which have come to my notice, this is a characteristic example. All are printed in color over a black and white

foundation, the deep reds and blues and greens running at the edges as if put on with a full brush. The scene is always set in the center of a large sheet. The lady is always retiring and coy. The gentleman wears a low waistcoat, a high stock, and Victorian whiskers, alas for high romance, while Cupid looks like a small English schoolboy intent on a new game. Park valentines are not beautiful, but they are well worth securing, and a few are decidedly amusing.

Quite different in style are two unmarked valentines, evidently from one manufacturer. Double borders are found here, — an outer embossed border and an inner hand-painted one enclosing a picture. Quite like Juliet in the balcony scene is the damsel portrayed in one of these valentines. Her raven locks are bound with strings of pearls, and her costume is “fancy” even for a period heavily weighted with the fanciful. From her lily white hands drops a letter to some waiting Romeo below. In type smaller than any Spencerian script flows the rhyme :

“Haste from my lattice missive fly,
Tell the fond youth for him I sigh.” —

and so through the painted border of roses, birds in cages, lambs, and festoons of fruit and flowers. Of the same period as the lady of the lattice is the bridal party of the other valentine. Possibly it is the same lady. The bride, gowned in vivid pink with a much be-feathered bonnet, leans on the arm of a slender individual who, true to tradition, plays the part of the insignificant bridegroom.

The next specimen in the Box, written in violet ink on gray paper and sealed with three red wafers, bears the date 1855. Four verses fill the large central space of the letter-sheet and show an ingenious blending of the old poets and a young man's original turn of mind. Each verse starts off with a line from an old song and is completed by the writer. The first begins :

“Believe me if all those endearing young
charms.”

The second :

“Oft in the stilly night.”

The third :

“Last night the nightingale woke me.”

And the final :

“I rise from dreams of thee.”

The sweet young thing to whom this offering was sent played the harp and doubtless was tremendously impressed.

Some collectors draw sharp lines around the year 1860, considering everything hopelessly new after that period; others deem 1850 the closing date. The Box has not yet attained to this discrimination. Two valued ones represent the first years of the Civil War, and there are several of the lace valentines of the late sixties. One contains a narrow border of lace paper, fine as a bit of rose point. In the center of the large undecorated sheet is what appears to be a silver hand mirror. When the handle is raised, a demure face is seen within the silver frame, hair parted, and a pink rose fastened over one ear. A more elaborate valentine shows a deeper lace border, and a stiff, prim bouquet of flowers which lifts up by a bit of ribbon and reveals

a verse. The later variations of lace and perforated paper, red hearts and plump Cupids, bring the valentine down to our own day and well within the memory of everybody. As this over-dressed type exists in many forms, its rather florid beauty need not be dwelt upon.

The Box boasts no rare Continental valentines dating back to the eighteenth century, nor many specimens that would cause envious pangs from collectors who have specialized on these particular things. It contains, aside from a few family trophies, what has been gathered together on quests for samplers, prints, old china, and silhouettes.

A few collectors in America have gone deeply into the old valentine subject. Mr. Frank H. Baer of Cleveland owns more than two thousand specimens, holding an enviable place among valentine collectors of the world. I heard of Mr. Baer's collection in London, where it was considered unique. Among the makers represented are Kershaw, Marks, Dobbs, Martin, Gilks, Peck, King, Richardson, Hughes, Bysh,

Hodgson, Kidwell, Tegg, Dean, Bailey, Harrison, and other Englishmen, Lloyd of Edinburgh, Leleux of Calais, and Riedel of Nuremberg. Of the work of many of these publishers, Mr. Baer has numerous examples. His oldest specimen is German and has been identified as belonging to the first decade of the eighteenth century. It is enclosed in a parchment case decorated in colors in a tulip design. Another novelty is a Swiss valentine dated 1811, circular in form and as gay as an old plaque of peasant pottery. One of the most valuable things in the collection is a chap-book, "Kemish's Annual and Universal Valentine Writer, 1797." It contains an amusing introduction on the origin of the valentine, crediting Valentinus of Rome with beguiling the time during his imprisonment in 207 A.D. by cutting curious devices in paper. There is much more to the story, which includes the devotion of the blind daughter of the keeper of the prison, whose sight was restored through a miracle performed by the young Roman and who received on the morning of his execution,

February fourteenth, a bit of the curiously cut paper, adorned with pious verses and signed "Your Valentine."

The writer of the "Annual" concludes, "There is great reason for supposing that to be the origin of the custom," — an early day indeed for the beginning of the observance.

Other annuals followed the one published by Kemmish, bearing such titles as "Cupid's Cabinet, or Lover's Pastime", "Annual Charter of St. Valentine's Festival", etc. Richardson, a printer in the Strand, provided his customers with "The New Fashionable Valentine Writer", while a convenient and timely book called "The Lover's Companion, or Valentines for the Trades", launched the early caricature or comic type.

In Mr. Baer's collection, a valentine published by Gilks in 1830 shows a jaunty shepherd in a long blue coat making violent love to a pretty shepherdess in a huge poke bonnet. Says the shepherd — and there is a little church around the side of a wall —

“From all the splendid gay parade,
Of noise and folly free
No sorrow shall our peace invade,
My home then share with me.

“A truly fond and faithful heart
I have to offer thee.
Promise, ere I with grief depart,
My home to share with me.”

CHAPTER IV

THE DAY OF THE BENNINGTON DOG

THERE is a bourne from which things, mere things, sometimes return, and back has come the china dog, — not as a parlor ornament flanking Parian vases and wax flowers, but as a collector's curio. His journey from mantel to cabinet has been marked by many and various vicissitudes. For more than twenty years he seemed as extinct as the dodo.

Dogs there are of many kinds, spotted, woolly, and mottled, but the dog *par excellence* is of Bennington pedigree. If the Vermont potters could have foreseen the present price upon his head, they might have abandoned the making of teapots and other useful things.

Ninety-five dollars for one lone dog!

Time certainly plays merry jests with forgotten things in potter's clay. Yet there is more than appears on the surface, with the story of the Bennington Dog. Not only must he be mottled in that peculiar brown,—molasses and cream not too well blended,—he must carry a basket in his mouth, and there must be a dash of green somewhere. How collectors hunt for that coveted color. No New England child scans a cloudy sky on picnic day for a bit of blue with which to construct apparel for a Dutchman more earnestly than the Bennington enthusiasts look for green.

From a strictly artistic standpoint, the emerald hue is not always an improvement, although undoubtedly attractive when used on jugs, bowls, and teapots. There is a great difference in the beauty of Bennington ware. At long intervals a piece is discovered which is almost as beautiful as Whieldon's tortoiseshell. In a certain corner cupboard are two octagonal plates of tortoiseshell, in which brown is blended in a charming way with green and near at hand is a Bennington jug in

which green is blended in a charming way with brown. It is a long, long way from "Little Fenton" to Vermont, and nearly a hundred years' difference in time, yet the plates and jug are remote kin.

In the history of American ceramics, the work of the Bennington Pottery looms large, and if collectors have been rather tardy in their admiration, it simply means that a foreign parentage has always been attractive to lovers of old china.

"Made in America" has seldom been a slogan to conjure with at auction sales or in antique shops. It is only fair that the Bennington Dog should now have his innings. The slights of many years are thus wiped out.

It was in 1846 that the firm of Fenton, Hall, and Norton established a pottery for the manufacture of "Rockingham" and yellow and white wares. "Rockingham" was the name given to the mottled brown paste which soon became the chief product of the venture. Teapots, bowls, and pitchers, Toby jugs, lions, match boxes, door knobs, and dogs were made in great quanti-



From the Collection of Dr. Pleasant Hunter

BENNINGTON DOG, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

ties. The useful and the ornamental flourished. Imitations were numerous. Long after the Vermont factory ended its labors, mottled teapots continued to flood the country, and may still be found in remote country stores, where agate kitchen ware has never penetrated.

"Parian" was produced at the Bennington works soon after its introduction by the Copelands, the first of its kind to be manufactured in this country. Parian vases, statuettes, cologne bottles, and other articles were extremely popular, and in the beginning far more costly than the humble brown objects.

Changes were rapid at the factory. Norton and Hall withdrew, and one Lyman was taken into partnership. In 1849 the firm changed from Fenton and Lyman to the United States Pottery Company. Nine years later the industry went out of existence, and an interesting chapter in American arts came to an end.

Much technical excellence is shown in genuine Bennington, and often very fine modeling. Taste was at a low ebb in the

fifties. Few foreign potteries show up to their best level in this decade. Everything considered, we have much to be proud of in the twelve years' span of the Vermont factory. One distinguished modeler, Daniel Greatback, famous for his pitchers with hound handles, did some of his best designing there. In his earlier career he made hound pitchers at the Jersey City pottery. Everything associated with his name is highly valued to-day. A genuine Greatback pitcher or jug equals fine historical blue in price.

The name, Greatback, has significance in pottery annals. William Greatback, the earliest to win distinction, served Wedgwood for many years. As a modeler, he ranks almost as high as Flaxman and Hackwood. Daniel Greatback came to America in 1837, winning honors wherever he modeled. His hound designs will always be treasured by collectors of jugs, or by those who make a point of Americana. That he was English only emphasizes the fact that in many of our pottery undertakings the inspiration came direct from the Mother Country.

There was another Daniel Greatback, a skilful designer, who made the well known "Tower" pattern for Josiah Spode in 1797. At the recent sale in New York City of the china collection of Doctor Pleasant Hunter of Newark, a jug with hound handle made by Greatback at the American Pottery Company, Jersey City, created a good deal of interest. A similar pitcher made in Ohio from the original mold brought thirty-seven dollars, while twenty-two dollars and fifty cents was paid for a hound pitcher marked "Gress Pottery, South Amboy."

In the Hunter collection were many specimens of Bennington. An hour-glass teapot, fluted, sold for eighteen dollars; a bottle in the form of a man with a low, broad-brimmed hat, twenty-seven dollars; a match holder, ten dollars; water pitcher, diagonal fluting, twenty-seven dollars; a coffee pot octagonal design, fifteen dollars; four door knobs, eleven dollars each; a water pitcher of Parian waterfall design, fifteen dollars, and a *mottled dog with a basket in its mouth for ninety-five dollars.*

The interest in authentic pieces was clearly demonstrated when a charming pitcher in mottled brown, yellow, and green, classified merely as "American", went for only three dollars. The dog was an excellent specimen of its kind and divided interest with rare lusters and early salt glaze. But the prize winner of the Bennington dogs, the real blue-ribbon candidate, belonged to the first portion of Doctor Hunter's collection which came up for sale several years ago. At that time, the Metropolitan Museum paid one hundred and twenty dollars for the dog shown in my illustration.

CHAPTER V

THE CALL OF THE BIRD

THE peacock has always held undisputed place in the decorative arts, but lesser birds come and go, appearing and disappearing without apparent rhyme or reason. Just now birds of many a feather flock together, — on wall paper, chintz, painted furniture, lacquered trays, and china door knobs. Grave, gay, serious, and frivolous, they add life and charm to countless things. Parrots of all kinds, their lesser brothers, paroquets, and their picturesque cousins, cockatoos, vie in importance with pheasants and birds of paradise.

It needs a frivolous age like our own to take a parrot seriously, particularly when stuffed and hung in a wicker cage origi-

nally intended for a thrush. The stuffed parrot would have horrified our grandmothers: possibly it would have amused our great-grandmothers. For some mysterious reason, we attribute to that remote generation a viewpoint similar to our own. As some one has aptly said, what our great grandfathers revered and our grandfathers despised, and our fathers neglected, we admire and appreciate. And so parrots stuffed and parrots painted, parrots carved and parrots cross-stitched, are very much in vogue.

The popularity of this green bird almost equals that of the peacock, and has completely routed the plump robins and sleek bluebirds of the William Morris school. Color schemes have changed. The interest in Chinese wall decoration has brought into play the most brilliant combinations, made possible by the liberal use of black and gold. Gone are the subdued harmonies beloved by Morris and cleverly described as "pickle and plum" by that gifted lady of decoration — Miss de Wolfe. Gone are the intricate patterns of many printings,

such as the "Strawberry Thief", drawn by Morris, and "The Macaw" and "Golden Age" by Walter Crane.

There is a directness about the new designs which almost takes our breath away. For this reason, they must be used with discrimination and decorative tact. The wall papers with their brilliant birds and flower-laden boughs, so fascinating when viewed in the shops, are fitted only for the most carefully planned schemes of furnishing, yet here it is well to keep in mind the warning in the old fairy tale: "Be bold, be bold, but not too bold." And so to our parrots.

Birds went out during the mid-Victorian period, except for an occasional crewel stork against a crewel mountain, a passing phase of the "greenery-yellery, Grosvenor-gallery style" of needle work. Storks and cranes and other long-legged fowl were in high favor with Eastlake and his followers. Carved in wood, they sometimes upheld those ponderous cabinet-mantels which moved Morris to tears and seem so absurd to our own generation. The pseudo-

Japanese birds of Eastlake took flight with the coming of the well-fed English birds introduced by the Master of Hammer-smith. Perched on leafy boughs, the latter seemed to feast perpetually on cherries and pomegranates. And, as everything in life is comparative, the new color schemes by contrast with the old seemed clean and bright. They were certainly more cheerful.

Eastlake has his place in the decorative scheme of things entire, but we do not take him seriously to-day. His mustard yellows, muddy browns, and chilly blues affect us very much as the "sad" color schemes at the Blimber school did little Paul Dombey, —depressing the spirits and ruining the digestion. Eastlake, however, is hardly more than a name to Americans, vaguely associated with the gingerbread woodwork of the Queen Anne houses of the early eighties. Decorative schemes overlap, and early Morris and late Eastlake possibly mixed a little at the edges. At any rate we jogged along comfortably in this country, painting the lily and gilding the rolling pin, quite unconscious of the "new move-

ment" until it was no longer new in England.

Our "Centennial" did not help us very much but the exposition of 1893 did. Between the two came the cozy-corner craze, truly the twilight of our artistic development, if not the dark ages. About this time most of the birds took wing, returning in vast numbers with the colonial revival. First came prim little birds in orderly rows, such as Jane Elizabeth, aged seven, and Abigail Ann, aged nine, worked on their samplers; birds unknown to the Audubon Society, but instantly recognized by non-members. Other colonial motifs, such as baskets of fruit and urns of flowers, appropriately appeared with the birds and have never been widely separated.

Few will dispute the serene and high place of Japanese craftsmen when birds, *as birds*, are under consideration. In metal, wood, and ivory, on paper, lacquer, silk, and cotton crêpe, we may follow the lure of the crane, the stork, the Mandarin duck, and the phoenix. Whether it be the work of one of the old "bird masters" or

some humble modern rendering, the action and decorative force are instantly felt.

Chinese birds are fascinating in an entirely different way, usually more brilliant in color but less spirited in action. Persian birds are of another type, colorful like those of Chinese decoration, but quite unlike in drawing.

To follow the call of the bird would mean a long backward journey through the centuries, dipping into ancient history and skirting the golden shores of mythology. More than the decorative significance would have to be taken into consideration. History, philosophy, and religion are all symbolized, and each opens an extensive field of investigation. If Christian symbols were under consideration, the dove would claim first consideration and the sacred pelican second. The latter is depicted in a striking manner by Sargent in the second portion of his mural decoration in the Boston Public Library.

In Japanese mythology, all the birds have an important place. The cuckoo depicted against the moon signifies caution;

the swallow in the willow tree, grace and sweetness; the crane with the pine tree, endurance; the crane with the bamboo tree, longevity; and the cock with the moon, vigilance. In Japanese art, the phoenix holds place of honor, ranking in importance with the five-toed dragon of China. Like the Chinese monster, his presence has royal significance. Since he comes to earth only at the birth of an emperor, it is necessary to preserve his likeness in countless ways. With the head of the pheasant, the features of the dragon, and the beauty of the peacock, this sacred bird is found in every form of ornament. His five colors signify the five virtues of obedience, uprightness, fidelity, watchfulness, and benevolence.

A record of the phoenix as set forth on porcelain and pottery would fill a volume, while a goodly book could be devoted to his representation in bronze. Most interesting of all would be a portrayal of his birdship as shown in old temple carvings. Beautiful examples may be seen in many private collections, and occasionally in the

shops one may find temple *rammas*, or ventilation panels, in which the long resplendent tail of the phoenix is made the motif of a unique grille.

Birds as found on old china open up an interesting field, but the trouble here would be to know where to start and when to stop. The English potteries of the eighteenth century alone would yield a rich harvest. The beautiful exotic birds of Bow, of Worcester, of Chelsea, and of Derby would fill many cabinets, while the birds found on Staffordshire would be past counting.

Black Hawthorn we would wish to include in the Oriental section and, by the way of contrast, in another, the quaint picturesque birds of early Pennsylvania ware.

Tiles would claim attention before the bird quest was over, and the pilgrimage would lead to the remote corners of the earth. And in the search it is quite possible that the stuffed parrot in the wicker cage might be completely forgotten.

CHAPTER VI

THE CONTENTS OF A CORNER CUPBOARD

THE corner cupboard shelters so many interesting pieces of old china that it is difficult to know where to begin with the history of the contents — whether to pass over the charms of the Lowestoft tea caddy and sing the praises of the Chelsea bowl, to describe the beauties of the Delft mug and ignore the Spode pepperbox, or to dwell at first and at length on the attractions of the five teapots. The shelves of the cupboard are lined with dark blue Staffordshire plates, and these clamor for recognition. Copper and silver lusters present their claims, and neither can be lightly set aside.

A few of the china treasures are inherited. The Liverpool pitcher belonged

to a great grandfather, Middleton; the Lowestoft tea caddy was part of the wedding set of a great grandmother, Holworthy; and the Delft mug the property of a remote Dutch ancestor, one Johannes Ten Eyke. Most of the pieces, however, that grace the cupboard have been collected during ten years of china madness, and every article has a story.

Far back in the cupboard is the Leeds teapot, its deep ivory paste making a charming foil for its neighbor, the Wedgwood pitcher. It is a tiny thing, for tea was a luxury when the Green brothers founded their pottery in the Leeds district of Yorkshire. Many characteristics of their early work are seen in this piece. The paste is almost yellow in the shadows, there are flecks of green in the glaze, and the surface of the ware is extremely uneven — suggesting that the maker had not fully mastered his craft. The high graceful handle and the fluted base show how closely the potter and the silversmith followed the same designs.

Standing near at hand, as if to claim

kinship with the Leeds, is a teapot of Bristol. It is marked with a cross in red, and around the handle and cover are narrow bands of green. Next to the Bristol is a small pitcher which is a veritable gem in copper luster. To see it in all its beauty it must be withdrawn from the cupboard and held to the light. Then it becomes so glowing that the other china idols pale for the moment into insignificance. It is brown without and within, and as lustrous as burnished copper.

When the little brown "Queen Anne" is placed on the windowsill to catch the light, all the other copper lusters are brought forth for comparison. First comes a pitcher of very dark brown, powdered with blue forget-me-nots. This piece stands the test bravely, and if the other pitcher had not been seen it would have been admired enthusiastically. The brown glaze is exceedingly rich and deep, and the little forget-me-nots are intensely blue.

Next appears a luster mug, beautiful in shape and quaint in decoration. The background is terra cotta, banded with luster

and ornamented with raised flowers in green, yellow, and orange. Following in the wake of the mug is a quart pitcher. It has the same terra-cotta background, luster bands, and green, yellow, and orange flowers. The mug is a valued souvenir of a week spent in an old farmhouse in the Berkshire hills. The pitcher was purchased in a dusty little shop in a Cape Cod village—from an ex-sea captain, who was more unique than any of his wares. Were these pieces once together? Did they form part of a cider set in the good old days? Or was this variegated floral decoration simply a common one in the copper luster?

The silver lusters are admirable of their kind. The fluted creamer and sugar bowl were made at the period when the potter borrowed his molds from the silversmith. These pieces are heirlooms and are among the aristocrats of the cupboard. Another lovely bit is the beaker, lined with copper, suggesting a silver cup filled with brown English ale.

The mugs make a goodly showing. The Ten Eyke is a fine specimen of late seven-

teenth-century Delft. The color is wonderfully soft and deep and varies from darkest blue to light gray in the more delicate part of the decoration.

Another mug is an English piece of the early nineteenth century. It is a vivid bit of color and makes a bright spot in a dark recess of the cupboard. There are bands of pink luster about the top and base, and on either side is a picture of a man in knickerbockers, sowing seeds. Printed in irregular letters below the scene is the line:

“As you sow, you shall reap.”

This mug was given as a reward of merit to a little New England schoolgirl, in the year 1818. When she was more than eighty she gave it to the owner of the cupboard. Without a crack or scar it stands between the pepperbox and the silver luster beaker, and the sky in the picture is just as blue and the field just as green as they were on the day little Deborah Adams received her reward and listened to a few admonitions on sowing and reaping.

The third mug is valued chiefly for the

discussions it provokes. It has a Lowestofty look in places, but its claims are not recognized by the tea caddy, whose pedigree is too well known to be questioned. It is exceedingly decorative. The paste is thin as egg-shell. On the face is a spirited drawing of the English coat-of-arms in colors, and scattered over the surface are groups of rather Chinese-looking flowers. It is an attractive thing, and until it is proved to be a base impostor, it has the sanction of the cupboard.

About the pepperbox and the gravy boat hangs the glamor of a delightful china hunt in the vicinity of Northampton, Massachusetts. These pieces were discovered in a gray-shingled house on the old Bay Road. The sole occupant of the house was a cheery old bachelor, who frankly admitted that he was tired of having the old things around. Under such circumstances, bargaining was not beset with difficulties, and the little gravy boat, the pepperbox, three flowing-blue plates, part of a pink luster teaset, and a miscellaneous assortment of sugar bowls quickly

changed hands. Not only was the history of each piece given, but the genealogy of the entire neighborhood was added. Half the family skeletons in town were unearthed and described at length. Around the pepperbox still lingers the tale of a feud between the old man's mother and a distant cousin living in the next town. The gravy boat calls to mind an interesting description of how the eldest son of the family lost all his property through the cunning of an uncle. Grim stories sometimes surround some of the china idols.

Of the Northampton collection only the pepperbox, the gravy boat, and one sugar bowl were considered worthy of the cupboard. The pepperbox is ornamented with lines of lettuce-green, and the gravy boat has the same delicate coloring. The little platter is edged with green, and the handles and ladle are green-tipped also. These pieces are almost as ivory in tone as the Leeds teapot, and, altogether, they are very pleasant to look upon.

A Lafayette teapot occupies the position of command in the cupboard. Deep blue

Staffordshire holds the eye and puts to flout the more delicate tones of Wedgwood and Canton. Consequently, the teapot has its own corner, where its glorious color cannot detract from the lesser blues. Enoch Wood executed many notable designs, but upon none did he bestow more care than on the Lafayette series. Whether it be the "Lagrange" views, or the "Cadmus" scene, or the picture of Lafayette at the tomb of Washington or Franklin, the same glowing blue is shown. James Clews depicted the "Landing of Lafayette" on numerous plates, platters, and teacups, but the color is not quite so deep. The two famous tomb views are identical, except the lettering of the names — "Franklin" and "Washington." The tomb on the cupboard teapot is marked "Washington", which is, perhaps, the rarer of the two.

Another interesting teapot is Newhall. This is older than the Staffordshire and a rather unusual specimen. Small English landscapes, executed in heliotrope, are the sole decorations, with the exception of a narrow line of purple luster around the

cover. Four slender feet form the supports of the pot and add to its quaint appearance.

Not far off is a small Staffordshire teapot, decorated in an all-over pattern in lilac. This is not so valuable as the Newhall, but it is a very pretty bit. The fifth teapot in the collection is of Lowestoft with straight spout and twisted handle. It has no ornamentation, except a band of blue dotted with gold stars and a monogram in blue and gold. This is not akin to the tea caddy, which is decorated in a more sumptuous manner.

Of sugar bowls there are seven. The evolution of this piece of tableware is well set forth in the cupboard collection. First, the silver luster one, which is without handles, and which, in point of time, followed the early sugar boxes.

The Bristol one comes next and is a literal bowl to which a cover has been added. Here the handles are narrow strips of china and are solely for ornament. Then follows the Newhall sugar bowl, which reproduces in a general way the outlines of its mate, the teapot. The handles are ear

shaped and are close to the body of the bowl. They have no value from a utilitarian point of view but are interesting as showing the development of handles.

A later design is represented in a Staffordshire sugar bowl decorated in pink. The handles are still ear shape, but are larger than those on the Newhall bowl, and approach more nearly the conventional pattern. A typical shape of the late eighteenth century is shown in the blue sugar bowl. This is one of the Northampton pieces and is an excellent specimen of medium blue Staffordshire ware. An English Maud Muller decorates this piece.

Early nineteenth century shapes are depicted in a pink luster sugar bowl and a fine flowing-blue specimen. These are both high and quite a departure from the low, quaint designs so long in vogue. The flowing-blue was made by Davenport and bears the imprint of an anchor. This sugar bowl is valued only for its association. It cannot be called a collector's piece. When first seen, it was full of maidenhair ferns in an old farmhouse.

The pitchers stowed away in the cupboard are many. They, too, form a fine object lesson in designing. They vary from the big Liverpool pitchers to the little blue Staffordshire creamers.

There are not many cups and saucers in the collection. The cupboard is of goodly size and of fairly elastic proportions, but it cannot hold all the china gathered together in ten years. A cup and saucer collection, and a small array of cup-plates, are placed elsewhere. A Lowestoft teacup and saucer and a coffee cup and saucer of early Davenport are permitted behind the traceried doors of the cupboard.

From one point of view, the deep blue Staffordshire plates are the most valuable pieces in the assemblage. Several rare American views are here, a scarce Syntax, and two fine Wilkies. All the plates are proof, and most of them are the desirable ten-inch size. There are no soup plates in the cupboard. To "historical blue" collectors, these facts are full of meaning.

Clews is represented by the Wilkies, the Syntax, the "Winter View of Pittsfield",

and the States plate. The States is an unusually clear print. It is not, however, the most desirable of the States series. The central picture of the design is the most common one of all — that of the boys with the net. Many people who own this plate do not realize that there are twelve States designs, the difference lying in the center picture. The "Boston Custom House" is a rare center, and so is the view of "Mount Vernon." The cupboard has not as yet attained to these. The work of Enoch Wood is set forth in the "Cadmus" plate, in the two "Baltimore and Ohio" designs, and in "MacDonough's Victory"; Ridgway's handicraft is shown by an eight-inch "Octagon church", and Mayer's by the "Arms of New Jersey." The cupboard aspires to Jackson's view of the "Hancock House", to the "Landing of the Pilgrims", and to the "Erie Canal" design, which contains the portraits of Clinton, Jefferson, Washington, and Lafayette. Undoubtedly, the Staffordshire gem of the cupboard is the "Harvard College" plate, which bears the initials, "R. S. W."

Of the several Harvard designs, the ones stamped with these letters are by far the most desirable. The beautiful oak-leaf border encircling the center picture is one of the finest things in Staffordshire ware. The initials "R. S. W.", supposed at one time to mean "Ralph S. Warburton", and later "Ralph Stevenson and Wood", are now known to stand for "Ralph Stevenson and Williams."

In the cupboard are several plates with English views. The Staffordshire potters knew their own country far better than they did America, and the English landscapes are marked by clear, excellent drawing and beautiful printing.

"Regents Park" is here; so, also, are "Fonthill Abbey", "Brancepeth Castle", and "Durham Cathedral." To-day, collectors of dark blue plates are eagerly seeking the English views and placing them side by side with the long-treasured American designs. The English plates in the cupboard were picked up before the attention of collectors was turned in that direction.

Many of the articles in the cupboard

would attract little notice at an auction sale of china. They are valued for their quaintness and for the interesting places and people they suggest. It is not safe to start the owner of the cupboard on the history of the entire collection, for there is no end to the chronicle. Into the story are woven the descriptions of long drives over the hills of western Massachusetts, of sketching tours through the fishing villages of Cape Ann, of days spent with a camera in the valley towns of the Connecticut River. Real Mary Wilkins characters are conjured up by the Bristol teapot and true Cape Cod folk by the flowing-blue sugar bowl. The Lowestoft cup and saucer bring to mind a picturesque old house at the foot of Mount Greylock; the lilac teapot recalls a famous hostelry near fashionable Lenox; the Davenport coffee cup, a visit in historic Concord. A country auction is recalled by the States plate, and an hour spent in a Salem shop by the view of "Brancepeth Castle." The "Harvard" plate speaks of many things, principally of an empty pocketbook.

To those who do not care for old china and have never spent precious hours in pursuit of a teapot, whose souls have never been stirred by plate or bowl, — to such as these, the corner cupboard holds no attractions. In their eyes it is merely a piece of mahogany furniture, filled with a miscellaneous assortment of old dishes.

CHAPTER VII

LOWESTOFT LORE

THE fascination of the sea clings to "Lowestoft", also the aroma of sandalwood and gum camphor, and the romance of voyages to unknown lands. Some day some one will write a Lowestoft story worthy of the theme, filling possibly three volumes. I suggested the project once to a well-known collector.

"But so much fiction has already been written about Lowestoft," he said. "Why ask any one to add to it?"

Perhaps the story will be included in the tale of our early shipping interests, when old letters, diaries, and account books are gathered up by some clever historian.

Writers on "Lowestoft" have devoted much space to the kind of china produced

in the town of that name and more to what was not. This information is interesting and important but seldom illuminating to the owner of a helmet pitcher. We read that the paste is usually opaque, that it is often transparent, that the modeling is crude as a rule, that it is usually well executed, that the glaze has a bluish tinge, that it is green, that the decoration is poorly applied, that it is beautifully done, that owing to the lack of marks identification is difficult, that owing to the fact that other potters copied the marks confusion has arisen! After reading much of this, one turns to a teapot of Chinese descent with keen joy. Let us have the Oriental variety by all means. Right or wrong, our Lowestoft!

Bent on securing picturesque information, I asked a friend, who had inherited a beautiful tea and coffee service, to write me as much of its history as she knew.

"About my old china," she replied, "I wish with all my heart I had not been so careless in my youth. Uncle Henry Bancroft brought the set to Maine when cap-

tain of a ship. I do not know how old he was at that time, but it must have been in his early married life. He died before I was born. My aunt died in 1874, at the age of eighty-four. There are fifty-three pieces of china, and the decoration is in brownish-red garlands of roses, and on each is a wreath of leaves with the monogram 'H. B.' in gold. There are coffee cups with handles and teacups without, two sugar bowls, two helmet pitchers, two bowls, two cake plates, a coffeepot, a teapot, a water pot and a tea caddy."

Another friend contributed to my Lowestoft lore in the following manner :

"The big punch bowl, about which you ask, has been in our family for four generations. Around the edge, inside, is a blue border nearly an inch wide, and below is a narrow border dotted with gold stars. In the bottom of the bowl is a picture of my great-grandfather's ship, the *Mary Prescott*, a three-masted, square rigged sailing vessel. On one side of the bowl is the Prescott crest in blue, black, and gold, with the initials 'R. T. M.' on a shield. The ship

is well executed, but the crest, we have recently found out, is not at all accurate. My great-grandfather made five voyages to China. On the third voyage, he gave the order for the bowl and brought it back on the fourth. On the fifth voyage, the vessel was wrecked off Cape Horn, and the entire cargo went down. The officers and crew were saved. My great-grandfather died before I was born, but my grandmother told me that he never spoke of the *Mary Prescott* after his return. For years the bowl was packed away, and my oldest sister, who married at seventeen, never saw it until she made me a visit last year in my western home.

“I have the name ‘Mary Prescott,’ and the bowl was willed to me by my grandmother, Mary Prescott Ransom. The ship was named after my great-grandfather’s mother. I am the fourth of the name, and my little daughter the fifth. I cannot give you the date of the fourth voyage, but it must have been before 1800. The bowl is in my dining room, in a small built-in cabinet, made expressly for it.

There is part of a teaset in the same pattern, stars and crest, but not in my possession, also a pair of tall mantel vases. And there are other Chinese things in the family, such as crêpe shawls, fans, and carved ivories."

The next letter was written seventeen years ago, and the writer, if living, would be one hundred years old.

"My mother, Clarissa Leonard, was married in 1799 to the Rev. Henry Wight of Bristol, Rhode Island. My father was pastor of the Congregational church there. My mother, like all young housekeepers, was very anxious to have a nice set of china, and for this purpose saved the wedding fees which my father always gave her. Not long after, a friend, Captain De Wolfe, who was going as super-cargo on a sailing vessel from Bristol to Canton, offered to take her gold pieces and buy a full set there. The few pieces left, you saw in my china closet. I suppose I heard my mother say how much she gave for her china, and when she bought it, but if I ever knew, I have forgotten both the

price and the date. It was years before my birth, and I was eighty-three in September, 1890.

"My grandmother's name was Abigail Alden; she was great-great-granddaughter of John and Priscilla. When a child, visiting my grandmother, she told me of Miles Standish sending John Alden to Priscilla to ask her hand in marriage, and of her laughing reply: 'Prithee, John, why don't you ask for yourself?' When 'The Courtship of Miles Standish' was published, one of my nieces wrote to Mr. Longfellow, asking how he happened to know our family tradition. To which the poet replied that he was a lineal descendant of John, the Pilgrim, and Priscilla, through their daughter Elizabeth, who married William Pabodie, and had heard the story when a boy."

Collecting Lowestoft letters was almost as interesting as collecting real Lowestoft, with the same dash of the unexpected.

The Chase china in the Metropolitan Museum, numbering two hundred and ninety pieces, suggested a story decidedly

out of the ordinary. Bequeathed to the Museum in 1910, it charms visitors by its beauty of line and decoration and by its unusual numbers. The quest for the personal history of this remarkable Lowestoft finally led to Annapolis, the home of the Chase family. And here is the letter :

“Samuel Chase, signer of the Declaration of Independence, built his Annapolis residence about 1770. The china known as the ‘Chase Lowestoft’ was ordered by him for this house and imported soon after the Revolution. By rare good fortune it remained in the family for more than one hundred years. By rarer good fortune it passed into the hands of a man so public-spirited that by the terms of his will it became the property of the Metropolitan Museum of Fine Arts where thousands may enjoy it yearly. This man was the late James T. Woodward, Esq., of New York City, formerly of Maryland.

“About twenty years ago, when many of the furnishings of the house were sold in order to increase the fund for maintaining the old mansion as a historic landmark,



Collection of Mr. Ross Hall Maynard

CHASE LOWESTOFT. TODDY JUG WITH SHIP UNDER
FULL SAIL; ON REVERSE THE SAME SHIP IN A
STORM



CHASE LOWESTOFT, METROPOLITAN MUSEUM

Mr. Woodward purchased the Lowestoft. The building is now known as the 'Chase Home.'

"The china is richly decorated and each piece shows the Chase coat of arms consisting of a shield bearing three stars and surmounted by a bird."

From England came the next document describing the now famous Blackheath china.

"Golfers in England are talking of an interesting find in old golf club china. It consists of some bowls and jugs, described as 'Lowestoft' but made in China. The pieces are six in number and were used by members of the Blackheath Golf Club, which dates back to 1608 and is the senior of all golf clubs. Until 1844 the club held its meetings and weekly dinners at the Green Man Inn at Blackheath, and in removing to a clubhouse of its own it is conjectured that the pieces were left at the old rendezvous and forgotten.

"In 1867 the Green Man Inn was torn down and the furniture sold. Then the china was bought by a collector, and the

specimens are preserved with other beautiful pieces by a member of his family living in London. The china is similar to some now in the possession of the club which is thought to have been purchased in 1786.

“A punch bowl, which had been broken and skilfully mended, is said to be the most interesting of the discoveries. It is white, with colored edgings, and bears a shield marked ‘Knuckle Club, instituted 17th January, 1788.’ Above the shield appears the crest, ‘a boot couped at the ankle, thereon a spur all proper’ with the motto: ‘Duke Periculum.’

“On the other side of the bowl is a shield bearing the arms, to use the technical description furnished by W. E. Hughes, author of *Chronicles of Blackheath Golfers*, ‘gules, two arrows in saltire argent, surmounted by a fess checky of the second and first, between three buckles within a bordure indented or.’ Above are the crest and motto of the other shield.

“‘The arms, which appear to have been borne by a gentleman of Edinburgh in 1672

named McAlla,' writes Mr. Hughes, 'were those of Mr. George M. Macaulay, alderman of Coleman Street Ward, in the city of London, who was captain of the Blackheath Golf Club in the year 1793, and who is frequently mentioned in the minutes of the Knuckle Club, of which he was elected a member in November, 1789, so that there can be but little doubt that the bowl in question was a gift from him to the latter club.'

"A second bowl has on two sides of it a golfing figure, with the motto 'Vi et Arte.' The jugs are alike in style. They are white with dark blue ornamentations, having lids surmounted by kylins, and each will hold nearly a gallon. Two are inscribed in front 'Blackheath Golf Club Treasurer's Jug' and the other two 'Blackheath Knuckle Jorum Jug.'

"Such old bowls and jugs, of different dates, and many quaint silver cups and trophies have been viewed by Americans at the Blackheath club-house. The course on Blackheath Common has only seven holes, and it was here that the custom

originated of wearing a red coat, so that the pedestrians would the more easily note the coming of a pair of golfers.

“Red coats are no longer obligatory, but the use of a fore caddie is compulsory at Blackheath, and he has to carry a red flag. There is no play on Saturdays on account of the crowds on the common, and as nearly all the members now golf at other links the Blackheath club-house and course are kept up chiefly through sentiment.

“The club-house has been in use since 1865, the club having made two changes since the removal from the Green Man Inn. The building is leased and was not built for a club-house.

“The first golf club-house was built for the Honorable Company of Edinburgh Golfers, on Leith Links in 1768, and while scores of houses had been leased for the purpose, it is curious that the next club-house built for golfers was nearly a hundred years later, that of the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St. Andrews.

“There was a need for huge punch bowls and capacious jugs in the golf of the eight-

eenth century in Scotland and England. The old betting books reveal countless fines of a dozen or two dozen of claret and of matches for even greater quantities.

"The old golfers were of a convivial sort, and the wagers and fines were consumed at the next sitting. Tavern parlors were the accustomed dining places, and the Green Man of Blackheath is only one of the hostelries famous in the early chronicles of the game.

"Americans may not at once place the Knuckle Club. At first the play at the Blackheath Golf Club season was only in the summer months, and toward the end of the eighteenth century the Knuckle Club came into existence for the winter play. Nearly the same players were members of the two clubs, and winter or summer, the competitions were followed by a dinner at the Green Man.

"The Knuckle Club subsequently changed its name to the Blackheath Winter Golf Club and after an existence of some twenty years, became merged in 1844 into the Blackheath Golf Club."

For many years china collectors in America neglected Lowestoft, perhaps for the excellent reason that really good specimens were difficult to find. People with family sets were not keen about parting with them, and the pieces that drifted into the open market were often badly cracked. Cracked Lowestoft is not attractive. On the pearly white paste every dark line shows forth as clearly as a cobweb in the best parlor. Broken Lowestoft is quite another matter. Those wizards, the expert china menders, can replace gaps in a punch bowl, supply knobs and handles, and reconstruct missing spouts. With inherited Lowestoft, a patched-up piece is far better than no loaf at all. It will defy detection, except on closest examination, although it might be disastrous to serve punch or brew tea, if the repaired article happened to be bowl or pot. A mended piece in a shop is quite a different matter. Most collectors are bent on securing proof purchases and, without the glamour of historic interest or family associations, a mended teapot is merely a

mended teapot. Moreover, the cost of fine repairing is considerable, and restored Lowestoft is consequently rather expensive.

Another reason for the long neglect of this ware was due to the fad for historical blue. By contrast the Chinese pieces seemed lacking in decorative qualities, although usually conceded to be the aristocracy of colonial china.

Several circumstances have brought about the present lively interest in everything labeled "Lowestoft." At least a dozen notable collections, rich in this particular ware, have been offered for public sale within the past year, thus bringing the opportunity of purchase to many people. A second and more vital reason is the increasing appreciation of the furniture, silver, and china associated with our early history. Few wares have so personal, so intimate a quality as the china made and decorated for well-to-do Americans between the time of the Revolution and the War of 1812. With the growing quest for the Oriental ware has developed a saner attitude toward

the Lowestoft controversy. If not exactly buried, it has been temporarily interred, or at least allowed to lie dormant.

At the Hunter sale in New York, when so many beautiful things were dispersed, a case containing two teapots and one coffee-pot created a good deal of interest. It is safe to say that ten years ago these three objects would have made a sensation and been the cause of minor newspaper comments. It is significant of the change of attitude on the part of American collectors that three pieces of genuine soft paste Lowestoft should have been passed over so quickly by both auctioneer and audience. To be sure, one of the teapots brought sixty-seven dollars, but had it been marked "Worcester" or "Derby" it would have made quite as good a record. Indeed it so closely resembled Worcester that it might easily have been mistaken for a teapot made during the Wall period. The colors were red, blue, and gold in a charming flower pattern. The other pieces were decorated in landscapes in a pronounced Worcester style. The first

teapot bore the mark of the makers and was undoubtedly the choicest piece.

Following came twenty items catalogued as "Chinese, — 'Lowestoft' so called." Worthy of note is the comma separating the "Chinese" from the word "Lowestoft." Evidently "Chinese Lowestoft" as a descriptive term did not find favor with the careful makers of the catalogue, Doctor Hunter and Doctor Edwin Atlee Barber. Most of this "Lowestoft, so called" was made for European patrons and more sumptuously decorated than the pieces found in this country.

When the Maynard collection of Boston was sold at the Copley Plaza, the choicest types of "American Lowestoft" came under the hammer. The corner cupboards of Salem, Marblehead, Nantucket, and New Bedford do not contain more beautiful pieces than were offered to collectors on this important occasion. The Stiegel glass, the early American silver, the rare furniture, and this charming china will long be remembered. From one of the cabinets came the toddy jug illustrated in this chapter.

On one side is depicted a ship under full sail and on the other the same vessel in a terrific gale. A grapevine border in gold and rich blue enamel outlines the top of the jug and is shown again on the cover. Other good things in this cabinet were six helmet pitchers, with tea caddies to match, teapots and bowls of exquisite decorations, a mustard pot and a pickle-leaf showing Washington's tomb and the initials 'J. R. T.' enclosed in a garland. These pieces formed part of a memorial set once belonging to General Terrier of Washington's staff and are extremely valuable. A tureen cover with the same view is now at Mt. Vernon, accompanied by a detailed history of the set.

The Maynard Lowestoft furnished convincing proof of the variety which a carefully selected collection exhibits. There were medallions filled with landscapes in sepia, armorial bearings in blue and gold, carefully executed crests in two or more colors, many types of floral decorations in plum, pink, reddish-brown and pale orange, several schemes which were extremely

Chinese, evidently not made to order, others showing the careful working out of elaborate instructions, but all suggesting something distinctly American and consequently very pleasant to see and doubly interesting to own.

CHAPTER VIII

THE HOUSE OF A THOUSAND JUGS

IF there were a "thousand candles", there are probably a thousand jugs, but I am not sure about the candles. The beauty about the house with the jugs is that it forms a most consistent setting for all the fine old things within its walls. The owner has a hobby for jugs, but he also has a hobby for old furniture, old clocks, old mirrors, old silver, old prints, old glass, and old china of many types. His collection of old Worcester is extensive; his early Meissen extremely choice.

Perhaps his greatest hobby is the large old house with its rambling halls and generous fireplaces. Like many New England collectors, he began with his inherited possessions and built up from them. Un-

like many, he inherited a colonial dwelling. Fate also made him a physician, which was hardly fair, seeing how much he had in the beginning, — for great are the opportunities which come to the collecting M.D.

Next to the tin peddler, immortalized by Alice Morse Earle, one day exchanging new pans for old brass and the next new brooms for Lowestoft, the most fortunate individual is the physician with a large country practice. His opportunities are hardly those of Mrs. Earle's hero, but he comes very near the center of family life, knows many of the family secrets, sometimes the family skeleton, not infrequently the family pantry. Closer than the minister, in some instances, is the doctor. Gratitude cannot be measured by the dollar mark, therefore his own cupboard is the richer. Wills are sometimes made in his favor when there are a dozen heirs to every teacup. All in all, he is particularly blessed.

If, in addition, he possesses the collector's instinct to a high degree, much knowledge about everything old under the sun, humor, human understanding, and kindli-

ness of spirit, his house will overflow with the rare and the beautiful, the queer and the quaint.

So, altogether, this old dwelling is a treasure house, and the contents are as many-sided as the owner. It is a collector's habitation, but first of all it is livable with old things put to their original use. Naturally it has a beauty beyond the dwelling merely filled with "antiques." There is no clutter. The repose is eighteenth century rather than twentieth, but the space is eighteenth; also eighteenth is the attic.

The many windows are unadorned with curtains. There are green blinds without and white shutters within, but no shades. Need it be added that this is a bachelor's house? But the gain in architectural beauty is conceded.

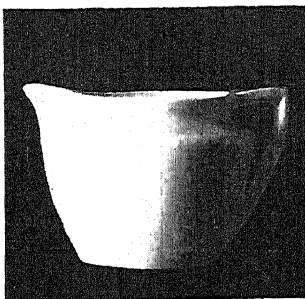
The choicest of the jugs, numbering fifty, fill a large cabinet. They are comparatively small and in the "creamer" class. First to claim attention is a goat-and-bee specimen, proof in every particular. It is a worth-while china experience to hold this beautiful thing in the hand,

noting the two diminutive goats and the rather large bee, and recalling that the earliest dated piece of Chelsea, 1745, is in the form of this famous design. It is now known that jugs of this model were made at both Chelsea and Bow, which settles one long china controversy. The jug of the cabinet has all the characteristics of early Chelsea, including a glaze which has the brilliancy of glass. So highly polished is the surface and with so many reflected lights, that it is impossible to secure a good photograph, while the most attractive quality about the jug eludes the camera. The soft velvety texture of the paste must be felt to be appreciated.

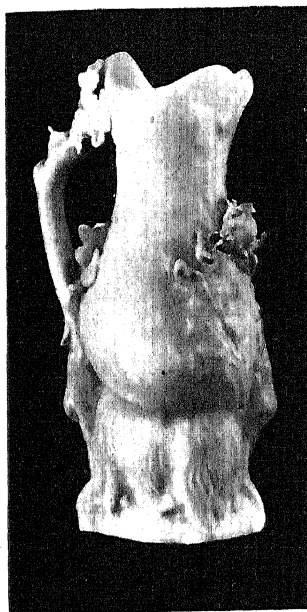
To pick out number two of the cabinet is difficult, so many jugs seem to take second place. My preference is for a creamer of black "basaltes", classic in outline and decorated with the strawberry vine in low relief. In every detail it is as exquisite as contemporary silver. My preference is also for a very fine specimen of Jackfield, a little hot-water jug standing on four feet and as glittering as to glaze

as the goat-and-bee, and as black as that is white.

The pottery at Jackfield, Shropshire, was one of the oldest in England. As early as 1713, under the direction of the Thursfield family, its reputation was well established. In 1780, John Rose, of pottery fame, became owner and manager. His long apprenticeship with Turner of Caughley had given him an excellent grasp of design. Jackfield, during this period, took on a different character. Flower motives in green and red and other colors ornamented the surface, and in contrast with the black glaze, produced a striking effect. There is a distinction, however, to the undecorated ware which is charmingly set forth in the little jug of the cabinet. In contrast is an undecorated piece of cream ware modeled on the lines of a little Roman lamp. Of slightly different design, but proclaiming the same period, is a delightful little creamer of clear white paste, sparingly ornamented in a semi-Chinese flower motif and showing a narrow but colorful border inside the wide lip. It



TWO CLASSIC UNMARKED SPECIMENS



GOAT AND BEE JUG,
EARLY CHELSEA



OLD WORCESTER,
BLUE AND WHITE

looks like Minton, but no mark confirms the theory.

My third choice for second honors is a most unusual bit of Spode, vivid as to decorations and suggesting in its outline Mason Iron Stone. Decidedly Oriental in feeling is the charming flower motif with the clear, green foliage and the highly colored petals. Quite un-English is the brilliant lilac seen in two of the flowers. Josiah Spode, Jr., was a potter of great skill, and in this little pitcher he is seen in a most attractive mood. He belongs to the early "nineteenth", however, and "nineteenth" will never fascinate as does "eighteenth." Yet Spode, together with Davenport, preserved the best of the old traditions, each one perfecting a beautiful ware. Spode's introduction of bone ash was one of the big china events of his generation.

Of earlier date than the Spode jug are two unmarked specimens claiming kinship through the color of their decorations. One has an embossed pattern of self-color, a creamy white, over which is an intricate design in deep blue. The other

carries an Oriental scheme of roses and birds. They are quite unlike in outline, — the first very English, the second merely semi-English. When in doubt fall back upon Worcester. This pleasing theory has given a name to many nameless things but hardly with so cautious a collector as the owner of this collection. There are several things which he frankly admits are unclassified. For instance, who made the jug of the gay mandarins, so Chinese in decoration, so English in outline and paste? Sometimes it is grouped with the Lowestoft helmet pitcher, sometimes placed in a corner by itself. It resembles old Plymouth in hardness, pseudo-Lowestoft in grayish-white, penciled ware as to handle and spout and colored Canton in decoration. Yet it is not hard paste in the strict use of the word. Oh, for the wisdom of Solon, — if not Solomon — with that of Hobson and Barber added.

It is simpler to turn to the Worcester transfer, of which there are several fine samples. Robert Hancock, who introduced transfer printing at the Wall pottery, then

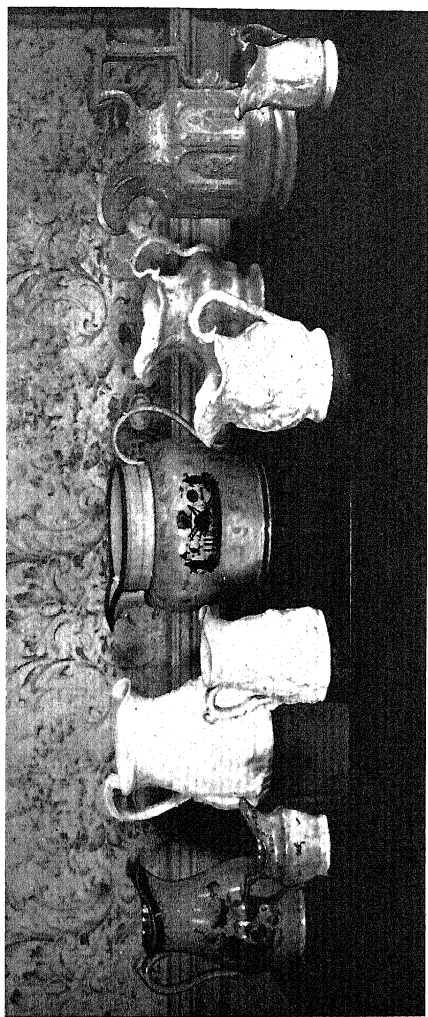
located in the historic Wamstrey House and studied at one time with the French engraver, Ravenet. Worcester of this period shows transfer decoration at its best. Hancock's many portraits, tea parties, and sporting scenes, have the quality of line engravings. Valentine Green, one of Hancock's fellow workers at Worcester, later took up mezzotinting and became a member of the Royal Academy. Sadler's transfer printing is well represented in the many Liverpool jugs, — rare Washingtons and splendid old ship specimens.

Of Worcester jugs in transfer may be mentioned Lord Nelson in portraiture, Frederick the Great, and the calm Charlotte cutting bread and butter. These are too large for the cabinet and line narrow shelves in the dining room, together with Ridgways, Alcocks, and Pratts.

Ridgway's Apostle Jug and five others in the same general class are taken down from their high estate to be photographed. There is an extensive choice of fine old tables on which they might be placed: Chippendale card, Hepplewhite half-moon,

and many beautiful Sheratons. A drop-leaf card table in the parlor is finally selected in order to secure a picture of the paper which has been on the walls for fifty years. This is but yesterday as the contents of the house go, but the pattern is interesting, and its many shades of gray make a delightful background.

Here a little later is placed a group of Lowestoft, including the Mandarin creamer, and here, for the pleasure of arranging and rearranging, are marshalled the copper and silver lusters. The latter, in combination with the black beauties of the cabinet, make a striking group against the gray paper. Jackfield is almost a luster in brilliancy, while the softer tones of "Egyptian" ware are very effective with the silver. Wedgwood did not long retain this early name for his black ware. Soon the word "Egyptian" was dropped, and "Basaltes", more descriptive of its composition, adopted. Oxide of iron gave to this pottery its ebony tone, and for a long time the secret remained at Etruria. Wonderful as are the jaspers, there is something about



A GROUP OF RARE APOSTLE, MASONIC AND OTHER JUGS

the black basaltes in tone and texture, which, to a few collectors at least, is far more beautiful. On purely technical grounds, perhaps, the laurels should go to "jasper dip", and yet it is not easy to say in which particular achievement Wedgwood was greatest. The work of this remarkable man is so extensive and varied that it can be realized and appreciated only when its many phases are studied and compared. Such a collection as the Gun-saulus in Chicago gives one a new reverence, not alone for the genius of this master potter but for what the skill of mortal man can accomplish.

All china collectors are disturbed, from time to time, by the thought of lost opportunities, the golden chances passed by and realized too late. With every fine bit of Wedgwood comes to my mind the picture of a tea set of raven hue, exquisite in its purity of line, exquisite in its delicate ornament. Garlands and arabesques in pale green and corn color are modeled in low relief upon the dark surface. In the British Section of Varied Industries at the St.

Louis Exposition, in a suite of eighteenth-century rooms, designed and furnished by the historic firm of Waring and Gillow of London, dwelt with other beautiful things in pottery and porcelain this lovely service. In the closing days of the Exposition it was offered for sale at a figure which must have been lower by far than the original selling price.

Quite regretfully I replace the three basalt, first the little strawberry creamer and next two graceful urn-shaped jugs similar to miniature Greek vases.

All the while, the many clocks in the house are ticking away the hours. When they are not ticking, they are striking — and they strike together and on time. The tall English clocks and the American shelf-clocks and the hanging clocks peal forth together. Then it is as if a dozen or more old music boxes suddenly came to life. You may count the hour with Willard, or Terry, or Thomas, or Jerome, or with several of the big English makers. You may choose painted ships or full moons, plain or decorated dials, straight-tops, or

round-tops, or bonnet-tops. You may choose a different clock for every hour of the day and not exhaust the supply, and if my theme were not jugs, this chapter might have been called, "At the Sign of the Swinging Pendulum."

CHAPTER IX

THOMAS HANCOCK'S CLOCK AND OTHER MATTERS

THOMAS HANCOCK, uncle of the man who once signed an important document in letters large enough for George III to read without spectacles, had a keen appreciation of wall papers, gardens, and clocks, which means that had he lived to-day he might have been an interior decorator or a landscape architect. As it is we know him best as a "patriot."

Of many letters which relate to the furnishing of Thomas Hancock's house — that stately edifice on Beacon Street demolished in 1863 to make room for a brownstone mansion — is a characteristic one about a walnut clock. Another and longer letter is devoted to wall paper. I

quote the latter first, so that the tall clock may have the proper setting.

“Sir — Inclosed you have the Dimensions of a Room for a Shaded Hanging to be Done after the Same Pattern I have Sent per Capt. Tanner, who will Deliver it to you. It's for my own House, & Intreat the favour of you to Get it Done for me, to Come Early in the Spring, or as soon as the nature of the Thing will admitt.

“The pattern is all was left of a Room Lately Come over here, & it takes much in ye Town & will be the only paper-hanging for Sale here wh. am of Opinion may Answer well. Therefore desire you by all means to Get mine well Done & Cheap as Possible & if they can make it more Beautifull by adding more Birds flying here and there, with some Landskip at the Bottom should like it well. Let the Ground be the Same Color of the Pattern. At the Top and Bottom was a narrow border about 2 Inches wide wh. would have to mine. About 3 or 4 Years ago my friend Francis Wilks Esq. had a hanging Done in the Same manner but much handsomer

Sent over here for Mr. Saml Waldon of this place, made by one Dunbar in Aldermanbury, where no doubt he or Some of his Successors may be found. In the other parts of these Hangings are a Great Variety of Different Sorts of Birds, Peacocks, Ma-coys, Squirrels, Monkys, Fruit & Flowers &. But a Greater Variety in the above mentioned of Mr. Waldon's & Should be fond of having mine done by the same hand if to be met with. I design if this pleases me to have two Rooms more done for myself. I think they are handsomer and Better than Paper hangings Done in Oyle. So I beg your particular Care in procuring this for me, & that the patterns may be Taken Care off & Return'd with my Goods. Henry Atkins had ordered Mr. Thos. Pike of Liverpool to pay you £10 in Liew of the Bill you returned Protested Drawn by Samml. Pike, which hope you'l Receive. Inclosed you have also Cristo Kilby's Draft of King Gould Esqr. for £10 wh. will meet with Due Honour."

What a pity that this gay paper of birds and monkeys, squirrels and peacocks

does not exist to-day. It greatly pleased Dorothy Q. when she came to the house a bride, and doubtless Thomas Hancock liked it immensely, for he ordered it for several rooms. To-day only a bronze tablet remains to tell the tale of all that Thomas planned so skilfully, and not a word of credit is given to him. John, his nephew, he of the plain chirography, signer, governor, and many other things, is given all the glory. To be sure he inherited the house and lived there for years and *was* an important person. Moreover he married Dorothy Quincy. Still Thomas, by all that's fair, should not be forgotten.

The clock letter is brief: "Let the time piece be of the newest fashion with a good black Walnut Tree case, veneered work, with dark lively branches on the top instead of balls. Let there be three handsome carved Figures, Gilt with burnished Gold. I'd have the case without the figures to be ten feet long, the price not to exceed 20 Guineas and as it is for my own use I beg your particular care in buying of it at Cheapest Rate."

Thomas Hancock did not mean to be led into wild extravagance, although in the latest fashion he fully intended to be. Whether his Walnut Tree clock is still in this world of things, I do not know, but for years a beautiful "Hancock clock" stood in the old Lawrence room of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. The top showed three balls, not dark lively branches, and there were no gilt figures burnished with gold; in fact, none of the things insisted upon by Thomas. But it was a clock of distinction and possibly more valuable than the one that could not exceed in cost the sum of "20 Guineas." Visitors to the present Museum miss the informal and somewhat incongruous arrangement of the former Lawrence room; the Henry II armor, the Boulle cabinet, the Flemish carvings, the German press, the Dutch chair, and the tall clock with the lacquered case over which were scattered small Chinese mandarins, pagodas, bridges, etc. Gone are the clock, the armor, and the press. The cabinet remains, also the beautiful Flemish carvings. Gone is the Nubian

boy of ebony hue holding back the crimson curtain. The wonder should be, perhaps, that this assemblage held together so long. Yet many people, for the sake of old acquaintance, regret its passing.

The clock was loaned to the Museum and later withdrawn by the owner. Aside from its association with the Hancocks, it is extremely interesting. The case shows the "Chinese" taste so fashionable in London in the middle of the eighteenth century. Marmaduke Storr was the maker, a well-known clock designer in the Strand. In accordance with the practice of the day, Storr abbreviated his first name, using only the first syllable. A curious story in connection with this signature was long current about the clock. It was said to have been made and sold from a shop near London Bridge, owned by a woman whose name appeared on all her clocks — "Marm Storr."

Tall clocks were made in England about 1660 and are associated with the name of Thomas Tompion — one of the famous clock men of his time. The Clockmakers' Company in London became a powerful

organization in the period following the Restoration. Clockmaking, in connection with other industries, suffered during the Protectorate. With the accession of Charles II, more peaceful conditions prevailed, and clock designing entered a period of great prosperity.

Hanging clocks go back to an earlier date. They were constructed with long exposed weights, a "bob" pendulum, a square dial made of brass, and an ornamental case surmounted by a dome containing chimes and a strike attachment. They were fastened to the wall by means of a metal guard or plate, which bore the outlines of a lantern. The "bob" pendulum was short and flew back and forth at the sides "in the manner of a shuttle." When the hanging pendulum was invented, a different style of clock naturally followed. Among the most highly prized of the old hanging clocks were the Friesland patterns, imported from the northern district of Holland. The guard plate was usually in the form of two mermaids painted in gay colors, and there were interesting

side ornaments in characteristic Dutch style. Unlike English and French "lanterns", there was a hood over the dome, giving the timepiece somewhat the appearance of a Swiss cuckoo clock.

The invention of the hanging pendulum was the indirect cause of tall clockmaking. While weights were little affected by exposure, so delicate a piece of mechanism as a pendulum needed protection. The first tall clocks were made with a long case, the dial retaining many features of the lantern timepieces. With the adoption of this style, an entirely different scheme of construction sprang into existence. The clock became a piece of furniture and was considered worthy of the cabinetmaker's consideration. Early cases had the straight cornice seen on cupboards and high chests of drawers. The design was plain, dignified, and very architectural. If rather ponderous, it was, on the other hand, finely executed, and to a few minds more attractive than the types which succeeded it — although less famous. Most of the clocks found in this country are of the later period,

when the scroll top had replaced the straight cornice, and when ornamental brasses were a part of the decoration.

Early dials were of brass, and the dial-plate was square. When the arched dial-plate came into existence, there was scope for ornament over the clock face; and full moons, vessels with flying sails, and other devices came into fashion. The character of the dial is a means of identification. Most of the English clock makers signed their work, but dates were seldom added. Mr. Lockwood, who has done for America what Litchfield has for England, makes some interesting classifications in regard to dial ornaments. The corner devices — “spandrels” — have been divided into three general classes. The earliest were heads of cherubs with outstretched wings; next followed cherubs supporting crowns, and later came more complicated heraldic ornaments. Brass dials continued in popularity until painted and enameled dials replaced them.

The style of clock best known to fame, most eagerly sought by collectors, most

often reproduced, is the style that became popular in America from 1745 to 1800. It has a scroll top, with two brass finials — balls, urns, or pineapples — and its face is ornamented in divers ways, a moon in the various phases of full, half, and quarter being one of the most popular decorations. Another but less well-known device shows a painted ship upon a painted ocean. The ship, usually a full-rigged brig or frigate, moves back and forth with every movement of the pendulum. The tick is loud but musical. “Forever! never! never — forever,” it repeats over and over, and has for more than a century. This type has been copied fairly well, but no modern clock maker can reproduce the tick. Time has something to do, perhaps, with the slow rhythmical tones of old clocks. A new clock that never goes is only half a clock; an old clock is even less. If it be as erratic as Captain Cuttle’s watch, it should be wound regularly, for its tick and strike are not of this workaday world.

It was in the early part of the nineteenth century when the timepiece that made the

Willard family famous came into existence. The tall clock, which in various forms had long been the accepted type, was now replaced by a lighter design. Houses were more plentifully furnished, and space was becoming a consideration. The tall clock was expensive. The amount of wood needed for its construction and the time spent in the making rendered the finished article comparatively costly. The Willards grasped the situation and launched the new design at what may truthfully be called a timely moment.

The honor of perfecting the banjo design has been variously awarded to Aaron, Benjamin, and Simon. Benjamin had shops in Grafton, Boston, and Roxbury, and was a man of considerable means; Aaron worked chiefly in Boston; and the two Simons, father and son, assisted Benjamin, later going into partnership. Old banjos have been found with printed labels bearing "S. Willard", "Willard, Jr.", "Aaron Willard", and "B. Willard." Simon applied for the earliest patent, under the title of "an improved timepiece", in 1802. It has

been stated that a clock in the House of Parliament gave the idea to the Willards, but this has been denied by several furniture authorities. If they were not the originators of the design, they at least gave it American parentage and have been so long associated with the type that it is too late now to rob them of the honor. Like the Martins of France, their fame has come down as a family. Many collectors rank Simon, Jr., first; others prefer the work of Aaron or Benjamin.

The type that followed the banjo and long remained popular was the shelf clock, associated preëminently with Connecticut makers. Among this group, Seth Thomas, Eli Terry, Epaphroditus Peck, Chauncey Jerome, and Silas Hoadley are notable names. In 1815, Terry sold his place of business in Plymouth, Connecticut, to Seth Thomas, whose name is a household word in his native State.

Clock makers were proud of their craft and continued it from generation to generation. The Willards made timepieces for nearly a century, and the Peck and Thomas

families had a similar record. Massachusetts claims the Willards, but Connecticut produced many of the famous clock-men of the nineteenth century.

Terry made many ornamental designs in which carving and fine brass work were conspicuous. The Jerome and Thomas styles, as a rule, were plainer and consequently less expensive. They are faithful timekeepers to-day in many Connecticut households. The Jerome type usually measures about twenty-two inches in height and ten in width, with a case of mahogany veneer. Below the dial is a picture painted on the back of the glass and touched up with gilt. The perspective is rather shaky, as if the artist were unequal to painting the landscape wrong side out. Churches of remarkable architecture, houses of queer dimensions, wonderful trees and birds are found on these clocks. The Willards seldom painted landscape, contenting themselves with a full-rigged ship or the American coat-of-arms, both of which were well drawn and beautifully colored. Much of the charm of the clocks

would depart if these highly interesting views were absent.

The dials of the shelf clocks are usually well drawn and sometimes well decorated. Terry often used Arabic figures, — in fact, between 1825–1840, Roman numerals were less popular than Arabic. An interesting fact pertaining to Roman dials is that the fourth hour is usually painted IIII. Modern clock faces are often thus engraved. Ask nine people out of ten how the figure four is designated on a clock or watch, and they will invariably answer, “Why, in the usual way, of course, like any numeral, IV,” all of which proves how unfamiliar we are with the most familiar things.

And the garden letter of Thomas Hancock is still unrecorded: “Sir — On the Same ship with my clock, my Trees and Buds pr. Capt. Bennett Came Safe to hand and I like them very well. I Return you my hearty Thanks for the Plumb Tree and Tulip Roots you were pleased to make me a present off, which are very Acceptable to me. I have sent my friend, Mr. Wilks, a memo. to procure for me 2 or 3 Doz. Yew

Trees Some Hollys and Jessamine Vines and if you have any Particular Curious Things not of a high price will Beautifie a flower Garden, Send a Sample with the price or a Catalogue of 'em. . . .

“My Gardens all Lye on the South Side of a hill, with the most Beautifull Assent to the Top & it's Allowed on all hands the Kingdom of England don't afford So Fine a Prospect as I have both of Land and Water. Neither do I intend to Spare any Cost or Pains in making my Gardens Beautifull or Profitable. . . .

“P.S. *The Tulip Roots you were so pleased to make a present off to me are all Dead as well.*”

CHAPTER X

A PORTSMOUTH PILGRIMAGE

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH has said that Portsmouth is rich in graveyards. He might have added with equal truth, "and in beautiful old dwellings." Time has dealt kindly with this quaint town by the sea. House after house, street after street, remain as they were in the days of good King George, and the fortunate stranger within the Portsmouth gates feels that the calendar has been turned back a hundred and fifty years. Where shall one begin in the colonial pilgrimage? Which iron gate, which stately portico, which broad threshold, shall be the first? The Langdon mansion and the home of Governor John Wentworth are just at hand; the Warner house is just around a most inviting corner. And

beyond these are more houses still. The day is not long enough for them all, and time is too precious to waste in indecision.

The Warner house has nearly completed its second century. It wears its years gracefully, yet with great dignity. The warm tones of the brick, the high pitch of the roof, and the finely proportioned doorway promise a goodly interior. The Warner house shall be first. There is one moment of hesitation before the brass knocker is lifted. Suppose there should be a modern wall paper in the hall; suppose, — but the great door has opened, and suppositions are unnecessary. The problem of hall paper will never perplex the inmates of this old house, for the wall is paneled from floor to ceiling. The white paint of this fine woodwork has the ivory tones which come with age, and which no enameling can give. After the sunshine outside, the hall seems very dark. Against the shadowy background is the suggestion of an imposing staircase. Through open doors are glimpses of family portraits.

When the parlor shutters are opened, the

staircase is revealed in all its beauty. Of carving there is none. In such modern houses as the Langdon mansion, built 1780, there is a wealth of carving — but not here. This old pile harks back to the year 1718 and is proud of its simplicity. The staircase has other claims to our interest, aside from the fact that it is a perfect specimen of its type. Ascending its broad steps, our eyes rest on the most remarkable wall decoration of which Portsmouth can boast, and this is saying much. Painted upon the plaster are life-size figures of men and women — allegorical, biblical, and otherwise. Doubtless in the mind of the artist there was some subtle connection between these figures, but we of to-day cannot grasp it. General Phipps is here, resplendent in yellow and scarlet; Abraham and Isaac are, perhaps, the chief characters in the panorama, — if such it may be called, — but more interesting are the Indians in full war costume and women in Grecian dress, carding wool at colonial spinning-wheels. Spirited as to drawing and brilliant as to color, they defy time and the spectator.

"Look at us carefully," they seem to say, "for you will never see our like again."

Long ago — about sixty years, which is not long for Portsmouth — these curious people were brought to light after more than half a century of oblivion. Buried beneath four layers of wall paper, their existence was unknown to the occupants of the house. Had not a workman, in making a slight repair in the wall, torn away a fragment of this heavy coating, their presence might still be a secret. General Phipps was first discovered, then Isaac, next one of the Indians, and finally all the figures stood revealed to the astonished household. How long they had been painted, how long they had been concealed, no one knew. Were they placed there by order of the man who built the house, Captain Macphædris, or did some later tenant employ a local artist? The oldest inhabitant could offer no solution, and thus they remain to-day a baffling bit of mystery.

Captain Archibald Macphædris, a Scotchman, and member of the King's Council, came to Portsmouth in the early

eighteenth century. He established an iron industry at Dover and engaged in an extensive fur trade with the Indians. Already a man of means, he rapidly amassed a fortune. Not content with the wooden dwellings of the town, he sent to Holland for bricks and tiles with which to erect a suitable home for his bride, the daughter of Governor John Wentworth. Several years were consumed in the building, and when completed, it was the finest house of its day in Portsmouth. Among many comfortable dwellings, there was none so substantially built, or so generously furnished. There was a hint of Dutch sturdiness in the pitch of the roof and the high brick chimneys, suggesting that the owner had imported Dutch ideas with his tile and bricks. The interior was patterned after the rooms which the gallant captain had known in the old country.

To-day, after a period of two hundred years, the house holds its own bravely and must still be conceded the most picturesque place in Portsmouth. By one of those little ironies of life, the name of the man whose

wealth and brain built the house is seldom associated with it. The Honorable Jonathan Warner married the captain's daughter, and it is his name that clings to the old pile.

Among the portraits in the parlor is that of Mary Macphædris Warner. Faded a bit with the many years that have passed over her head, she still charms with her painted smile. Surrounding this eighteenth century maid are several people whom she knew in life, — women in brocade and velvet, and officers in wigs and gold lace.

The Warner coat-of-arms decorates the narrow mantel shelf, and by its side is that of the Sherburne family. In the early nineteenth century, the house passed, by inheritance, into the hands of Colonel John Sherburne, an honored name in Portsmouth annals. The parlor, with its beautiful paneling, quaint blue tiles, and fine furniture, is a pleasant place in which to linger, and we leave it with reluctance. But across the hall is a room which cannot be ignored.

Paneled from floor to ceiling, this spacious

apartment has the charm of the rest of the house. On one side of the fireplace, tiled in brown, is a cupboard deftly concealed in the paneling. Upon deep shelves are the silver and china of many Warners and Sherburnes, beautiful old pieces that are the more attractive for the reason that they are shown for a moment and then quickly hidden from view. Through traceried doors of a great mahogany cupboard may be seen curious shells and bits of pink and red coral brought home by some seafaring Sherburne. The light comes in dimly through the half-closed white shutters and touches with a ghostly hand the dark mahogany furniture, the silver candlesticks upon the mantel, and the high brass andirons on the hearth. There is something eerie about it all, and for a moment the present slips into the past. All old houses are full of ghosts, and there are many in these paneled rooms.

Some one has opened the great door in the rear of the hall, and the garden and distant landscape are seen as through a frame. It is a glimpse of the outside world that brings us back to the present. Beautiful

old house! Would that we could carry away every brick and stick and stone.

On quiet Pleasant Street is a fine mansion that is a trifle impatient of the homage done the Warner house. It was built by Colonel John Langdon soon after the War of the Revolution and is a beautiful specimen of the late eighteenth-century type. Outwardly it resembles the work of Samuel McIntire, the great Salem architect. It stands back from the street and is partly concealed by the heavy foliage of fine old trees. A high fence shuts out the outside world and bids modern Portsmouth, what little there is of it, not to encroach upon its borders. There is an aloofness about the old house quite lacking in the Warner home. It seems to challenge the visitor and to demand the name of at least one great-grandfather. If you have the necessary great-grandfather, you need no other passport; the door that opened long ago to admit Washington and Lafayette will graciously swing wide for you.

The owners of this old house are most hospitable: they were never known to turn

away the humblest stranger. It is the old house itself that is so stiff on the subject of family tree. Or is it simply a bit of imagination on the part of the visitor, who is a trifle awed by the thought of the illustrious ones who have knocked at its door?

Famous for its good cheer, the Langdon mansion harbored many guests whose names still shed a faint glory. Few visitors of note came to Portsmouth who did not stay with Colonel Langdon. If they tarried in town for a few hours only, they seldom went away without breaking bread with him. If they dined at the William Pitt tavern, they repaired to the Langdons' for tea.

The Langdon tea and the room in which it was brewed are mentioned in several journals. In 1782, the Marquis de Chastellux, a major general serving under the Count Rochambeau, came to Portsmouth. In his diary he writes: "After dinner we went to drink tea with Mr. Langdon. He is a handsome man and of noble carriage; he has been a member of Congress, and is now one of the first people in the country. His house is elegant and well furnished, and

the parlor admirably well wainscoted. Mrs. Langdon, his wife, is young, fair, and tolerably handsome, but I conversed less with her than with her husband, in whose favor I was prejudiced from knowing that he had displayed great courage and patriotism at the time of Burgoyne's expedition."

This was written three years after Burgoyne's defeat, when the memory of John Langdon's stirring speech, delivered before the battle, was ringing in the ears :

"I have a thousand dollars in hard money," he said ; "I will pledge my plate for three thousand more ; I have seventy hogsheads of Tobago rum, which will be sold for the most they will bring. They are at the service of the state. Our friend Stark may be safely intrusted with the honor of the enterprise, and we will check the progress of Burgoyne."

John Langdon was five times governor of his State and the recipient of many other political honors. In 1812, the nomination of vice-presidency of the United States was offered him, which he declined. Washington held him in high favor and made

the Langdon house his Portsmouth headquarters. In 1789, Washington wrote in his diary: "There are some houses in Portsmouth, among which Col. Langdon's may be esteemed first." An item of greater interest reads: "Drank tea with Mrs. Langdon and a large circle of ladies."

The room in which Washington, Lafayette, the Marquis de Chastellux, and other notables drank their tea still retains its fine wainscoting, its arched doorways, and carved mantel. It is as beautiful now as it was a hundred years ago and has the additional charm that comes with age. We do not wonder, as we walk through the rooms, that the house won the admiration of Louis Philippe, who was entertained here when a youth, in company with his two brothers, the Ducs de Montpensier Beaujolais. Years later, when a Portsmouth belle was presented at the French court, she was asked by Louis if this mansion of the brave Governor Langdon were still in existence.

The beauties of this house cannot be exhausted in a few hours, and it is late in

the afternoon when we pass down the tessellated walk, through the iron gate, and out into the street. St. John's church is near at hand, and a glimpse of its interior will be fitting close to the day. No house holds quite the interest of this old church, so close identified with the history of the town. Of the first Episcopal chapel in Portsmouth, no exact date is given, but it is known that the majority of the early settlers belonged to the Church of England. Captain John Mason, one of the founders of the Piscataqua Plantation, sent from England the first communion plate and first prayer books used in the settlement. Nearly one one hundred years later, in 1732, Queen's Chapel was erected on the site of the present church. The chapel was named in honor of Queen Caroline, who acknowledged the tribute by presenting the parish with two carved mahogany chairs and a silver communion service. The chairs were placed in the canopied pew of the royal governor. At a later period, the pew was reserved for distinguished guests, and to-day "the chair in which Washington sat" is pointed out to us.

In 1808, the chapel was destroyed by fire, and a picturesque landmark was lost to Portsmouth. The new church did not retain the old name, but the Queen's memory is perpetuated in the beautiful altar service and one of the chairs — presumably the one which the father of his country honored. The silver service is of the fine eighteenth-century period, when designs were still extremely simple. The tall flagons are very graceful and are engraved with the royal arms. The church is full of relics, which a kind Providence preserved from the flames, the bell, perhaps, being the most remarkable of them all. It was rescued from the belfry by the brave youth of Portsmouth, but its beautiful tone was gone, and it was recast by Paul Revere.

This is only part of its history. It was captured at the siege of Louisburg by the officers of the New Hampshire regiment and presented to the chapel by Sir William Pepperrell in 1745. The bell was an old one even then, having been sent over from France in the previous century. Cast in relief is this inscription in Latin: "I am

the voice of life. I call you. Come. Pray."

Another trophy of war, which may barely be seen in the gathering twilight, is the baptismal font. It is too dark to decipher the long Latin inscription, and it is simpler to read the quaint translation :

"Sarah Catherine and Ann Elizabeth, accomplished daughters of Captain John Tufton Mason, generously gave this Baptistery, acquired from the French at Senegal, under the auspices of the above mentioned John, to the English Church at Portsmouth, in the year of our Lord 1761, and the 26th of the preaching of Arthur Browne. Wyseman Clagett and Samuel Livermore, Wardens."

Every name in this inscription suggests an interesting biography. Captain John Tufton Mason was a descendant of the original John Mason. Wyseman Clagett was a unique town character of whom many anecdotes are told. The Rev. Arthur Browne was rector of Queen's Chapel for thirty-seven years, and during that period christened, married, and buried the quality

of Portsmouth. It was he who performed the ceremony when Governor Wentworth wedded his pretty housemaid, Martha Hilton, a circumstance which Longfellow relates in one of the "Tales of the Wayside Inn." The Rev. Arthur was a most reluctant participant in this affair, and "disobeyed the voice of conscience" rather than incur the wrath of the stormy bridegroom. But this story cannot be told away from its setting — the council chamber of the Wentworth mansion at Little Harbor, some two miles distant. It must wait for another day and another pilgrimage.

CHAPTER XI

AN OLD MANSION BY THE SEA

THE history of the Wentworth family is so interwoven with the annals of Portsmouth that it is impossible to study the one without becoming deeply interested in the other. The town is full of old houses once occupied by distinguished Wentworths, and it is a bold tourist who attempts to see them all.

To those who enjoy genealogical puzzles, the history of this illustrious family, in three volumes, is recommended. The Wentworth habit of marrying Wentworths makes a tangled family tree. After the fifth generation, the branches are so twisted that no one save a Wentworth can straighten them out, and even then it is difficult to locate correctly the innumerable Johns. In the family book there are

a hundred and forty plain Johns and twice as many where John is used with a middle name, making *John Wentworth* a worthy rival of *John Smith*.

There is an ancient rhyme with the jingle of Old King Cole that runs :

“On the Wentworth tree
Were Governors three
And three brave men were they.”

The governors three were John Wentworth, his son Benning, and his grandson, John the second. The “first governor John”, to use a Portsmouth phrase, lived on Pleasant Street, not far from where Colonel Langdon subsequently built his house; the third of the Wentworth governors, John the second, also resided in the town; but Benning, the most renowned of the family and the most picturesque figure of his generation, chose Little Harbor, two miles away, as the place of his abode. The three houses are still standing and are full of associations. Historic interest fairly oozes from every door knob. The lover of old houses, old furniture, and old china is

seized with a desire to have them all and spend his remaining days in each. But if only one may be acquired, it must be the rambling old structure at Little Harbor, so near the sea that it suggests a line in one of Aldrich's poems,

"Like to a heron with one foot in stream."

Aldrich did not say this of the Wentworth house: he wrote it in *Wyndham Towers*, with no thought of Portsmouth in his mind, but it fits the old mansion as if made for it.

Outwardly the house is picturesque rather than beautiful. It hardly justifies Longfellow's description, being too irregular for either a "baronial" or a "stately" effect. It cannot compare in dignity with the finely proportioned Warner and Langdon houses, or with the Sparhawk homestead at Kittery, designed by Sir William Pepperrell and presented to his daughter at the time of her marriage to Nathaniel Sparhawk.

Benning Wentworth was his own architect, a fact which accounts for many of the oddities of the house. The setting of the

old pile is charming, with its combination of trees and rocks, of green lawn and shining sand. This blending of country and seashore is characteristic of the New Hampshire coast, and no one grasped its possibilities better than Governor Benning. Viewed from the entrance to the driveway, the house appears to be surrounded with low, wooded hills. No hint of the sea is given. On nearer approach, the hills assume the shape of distant promontories separated from the mainland by a wide expanse of sea. Very attractive at all times are the sea and the hills, but particularly so on a June day, when the sky is turquoise, the water sapphire, and the hills deep emerald. This is the day to choose for a pilgrimage. Vines and flowering shrubs soften the lines of the old house and make it a veritable garden spot.

The Wentworth mansion has been fortunate in its occupants. It has not changed hands many times, neither has it been altered to conform to modern standards of living. It was in the year 1750 that Governor Benning first lighted a blaze in the

mammoth fireplace of the council chamber and invited all his friends to a colonial house-warming and in the early part of the nineteenth century it was still in the possession of his family. From a Wentworth it passed into the hands of Charles Cushing, Esq., and from his descendant it was purchased by Mr. John Templeman Coolidge, Jr., of Boston. It is now occupied only in the summer and fall. On late October days the great fireplace roars as of yore, and Wentworth hospitality is still maintained.

Whatever may be said of the architecture of this old structure, no Portsmouth interior holds greater interest. It is a real story-book house, full of unexpected stairways, secret passages, and hidden corners. No two of the main rooms are on the same level; you go down a few steps to reach one apartment, up a short flight to enter another, and through a narrow passageway to gain a third. Without a guide it is quite bewildering, and the visitor is apt to wander around in a circle and unexpectedly return to his starting-place. The house is

as full of odd nooks and crannies as the brain of the governor was of odd crotchets. According to the diary of a relative, no one could tell what whim would next seize the fancy of Benning Wentworth. He was always doing the unexpected — a fact which makes his marriage to Martha Hilton extremely consistent and so characteristic a bit of folly as to scarcely warrant the surprise of his friends. The story of this romantic wedding has been told many times; how pretty Martha Hilton left quarrelsome Dame Stavers of the town tavern and became a housemaid in the Wentworth mansion; how the governor a few years later gave a banquet and invited all his friends; how, when the dinner was over, the host turned to the Rev. Arthur Browne and said: "This is my birthday; it shall likewise be my wedding-day and you shall marry me;" how Martha, unnoticed by the guests, entered the room dressed in all the finery of a great lady; how the rector protested, and the governor stormed, and how the confusion was finally ended by the bridegroom's shouting:

“As the chief magistrate of New England, I command you to marry me.”

This oft-repeated story owes much of its popularity to Longfellow, who wove the scene into one of the “Tales of a Wayside Inn.” Of the company at the banquet he mentions “The Pepperells, the Langdons and the Lears, the Sparhawks, the Penhallows and the rest. But why repeat the name of every guest?” Among the number were all the first families of Portsmouth, including the Sherburnes, the Sheafes, the Warners, the Cuts, the Atkinsons, the Pickerings, and many Wentworths.

Hasty second marriages were not uncommon in the governor’s family. The Rev. Arthur Browne was summoned a little later to attend a town wedding that was even more disturbing. A month before he had conducted a funeral service at the house where a distinguished Wentworth had passed away, leaving a disconsolate widow. When the good rector was summoned, he hastened to obey, supposing that his prayers and sympathy were requested. As he approached the dwelling, the

brilliantly lighted interior gave him a slight misgiving. Guests in gala attire were arriving, and through the window he could discern Madam Wentworth in brocade and jewels. By her side was a kinsman of the late departed, arrayed in glittering regimentals. The house of mourning had been turned into a house of rejoicing. Reluctant to enter and yet not daring to take refuge in flight, the poor man sought madam's presence and begged to know the cause of the unwonted mirth. How madam overcame the rector's scruples and how the ceremony proceeded are matters of local history.

But the end had not yet come for the rector. As he descended the steps, whether owing to a disturbed conscience or to his uncertainty as to what might happen next, he lost his balance and plunged headlong to the sidewalk below. During the period of enforced idleness that followed this mishap, he had time for many reflections and doubtless realized how precarious was the path of one who tried to serve both God and Mammon.

The new Lady Wentworth of Little Harbor filled her position gracefully and

carried her head as high as though born to the purple. When she rode into town with all the bravery of a coach and four, she instructed her coachman to pass the Halifax tavern. The deep curtsy of Mistress Stavers was no doubt as gratifying to the lady in the coach as it was galling to the dame at the door. The slights of many years were more than avenged in that one moment of triumph.

Benning Wentworth's commission as governor expired in 1767, and he was succeeded by his nephew John. Three years later Martha was left a widow and sole owner of the Little Harbor estate. After a brief period of mourning, she married Michael Wentworth, a retired officer in the English army. Their only daughter followed the family custom and wedded a Wentworth, John by name, a nephew of the third governor. "Once a Wentworth, always a Wentworth" seems to have been the family motto. The Wentworth way of marrying Wentworths has been explained on the ground that once having borne that name no one wanted to relinquish it.

To be a Wentworth in Portsmouth is like being a Biddle in Philadelphia, and when this is understood nothing more need be said on the subject.

Standing before the huge fireplace in the council chamber, the visitor is forced to admit that Benning Wentworth built wisely. His house, in spite of its shortcomings, has outlived many a more beautiful dwelling and bids fair to last another century. The mantelpiece is as clear cut as if just from the workman's chisel, and is more richly carved than was common in New England houses of the period. The proportions are excellent, and quite in keeping with the lofty dimensions of the room. The walls are a deep yellow, which harmonizes with the white woodwork and old mahogany furniture. Many of the pieces were used by Benning Wentworth and his lady and have never been removed from their original setting. In one corner are the old guns, and at the entrance door are the ancient racks where once were placed the muskets of the governor's guard. At one time the portraits in the council chamber formed a

worthy collection, which people journeyed to see. When the mansion passed out of the hands of the Cushing family, these old pictures were removed and are now in the possession of Miss Cushing, who lives near the old house. An early photograph shows a portrait of Mrs. John Hancock by Copley, and a very interesting portrait of a Swedish sovereign, which was presented to an American diplomat. The fame of this lofty chamber has somewhat overshadowed that of the other rooms.

The parlor, with its quaint wall paper ordered by the governor from a London firm, is in a fine state of preservation. The color has long since faded out of the background of the paper, but the design is clear, and not unlike recent English patterns. Upstairs in a spacious chamber, where the paper is the same, the walls have been restored. The background is a deep chrome, and the figure in soft grays and browns is most effective.

The old billiard room shows signs of age more than any of the other apartments. The floors are uneven, and the once green

and pink wall paper has faded to a misty gray. This room is so near the water that the visitor has the feeling of being at sea, an impression that is heightened by the uneven floors and the sagging windows. From this apartment open small card rooms where, according to a Portsmouth historian, the aroma of colonial punch still lingers.

In the dining room of the house is a notable collection of blue china, old prints, and pewter. The paper here is new, but has been chosen with a due regard to the demands of the room. It is a pictorial design in blue and affords a good setting for Staffordshire and willow ware.

The attic and cellar of this historic mansion must have their passing word. In the upper part of the house are many small compartments once used by the governor's slaves, and in the cellar are an equal number of compartments, somewhat more commodious, where once were quartered the governor's horses. From top to bottom the old pile is full of interest, and a long June day is quite too short in which to do it justice.

CHAPTER XII

SIR WILLIAM'S STAIRCASE

NOT far from the Wentworth mansion at Little Harbor stands the Sparhawk house at Kittery Point, which New Hampshire cannot claim. It was built by William Pepperrell, the first American baronet, and presented to his daughter at the time of her marriage to Nathaniel Sparhawk, in 1742. The Granite State is rich in old dwellings and does not quarrel with fate for locating this fine specimen of Colonial architecture just across the Maine line. The house is near enough to Portsmouth to be a part of its old-time atmosphere, and to geographical boundaries the average pilgrim is indifferent. The house was built about the time of the Benning Wentworth mansion and is a connecting link between the Warner and Langdon dwellings.

Old houses are hypnotic. The one you

are in is always the most fascinating; for a moment the others fade into the background. To decide which old place in this part of New England is the most interesting is a far harder task than the one that confronted Paris in the famous contest with the apple. The exterior of one, the hall of another, the parlor of a third, the dining room of a fourth come to mind and make a decision impossible. If the Warner house has the wall decorations, and the Langdon house the carved woodwork, and the Wentworth house the fireplace, the Sparhawk house has the staircase. Sir William's staircase, it should be called, for it was he who drew every spindle, thus proving himself as great a master with the draughting-board as with the musket.

To-day the hall of the Sparhawk house stands as it was originally planned. The staircase is intact, the wall paper is the same, the furniture is unchanged. The only discordant notes in the picture are modern visitors in modern clothes who go up and down the staircase. No powdered hair, no queues, no patches, no rustling brocades,

no glint of gold lace mark these pilgrims, and, it must be added, no old-time grace of mien and speech.

The only drawback to life in a colonial mansion would appear to be the pilgrims — the never-ending summer procession of people who lift the big brass knocker, timidly or boldly as the case may be, and ask to "see the house." A courtesy that could not be surpassed in the eighteenth century characterizes the inmates of these old houses. Something more lasting than the mere charm of old paint and paper is felt by every visitor, for the hospitality extended is as colonial as the furniture. Perhaps Mr. Horace Mitchell, the owner of the Sparhawk estate, voices the sentiments of other householders when he says: "Historic houses are public property."

If the Wentworth mansion has been fortunate in its occupants, the Sparhawk place has also. So perfectly has the building been preserved that restoration, except in a few details, has not been necessary. The plan of the house is that favorite one of colonial designers, a broad hall with

rooms on either side. At the right is the parlor, which is of noble proportions, extending the depth of the house. It is paneled from floor to ceiling and contains a fireplace of great beauty. The latter is very plain; there are no columns, no shelf, no tiles. The beautiful paneling makes any ornament superfluous. Flanking the fireplace are built-in cupboards filled with old china. The paneled shutters temper the light and render curtains unnecessary. No draperies conceal the fine woodwork of the windows, and the doors are not marred by portières. There is a simplicity about the room which is very remote from the twentieth century.

William Pepperrell built better than he knew, and in some respects modern architects have not surpassed him. Had he not won fame in other fields, he would be entitled to a few laurel leaves for his work on this house, which is now merely reckoned as one of several achievements.

It was the siege of Louisburg that brought fame and knighthood to plain William Pepperrell. This was in 1745, a few years

after the marriage of his daughter to the Honorable Nathaniel Sparhawk. Pepperrell was a man of simple tastes and cared less for his title than did many of his friends. He occupied an important position in affairs of state and was as unique a personality as Benning Wentworth. The name Pepperrell was spelled in divers ways, sometimes with one p, one r, one l, sometimes with all double letters and again with every conceivable combination of double and single letters. There are almost as many variations of Pepperrell as of Shakespeare, and early historians made use of them all.

Among the documents extant signed by William Pepperrell is a letter written in 1741, in the interest of Elizabeth, who was a much petted only daughter. It shows the baronet in a new light and proves that he could plan a lady's wardrobe as successfully as he could a staircase.

"Piscataqua in New England, October 4.

FRANCIS WILLIS, Esq.

Sir:

Your favor of ye 16th May and 24th June last I received by Captain Prince, for which am

much obliged to you. Inclosed you have a receipt for 46 pieces of gold weighing 20 ozs, which will be delivered you, I hope by Robert Noble of ye ship America, which please to receive and credit to my account with, and send my by ye first opportunity for this place or Boston, Silk to make a woman a full suit of clothes, the ground to be white Padusoy and flowered with all sorts of colors suitable for a young woman, another of white watered Taby and Gold Lace for trimming of it, 12 yards of green Padusoy, 13 yards of Lace for a woman's head dress, 2 inches wide as can be bought for 13 shillings per yard, a handsome Fan with a leather mounting as good as can be bought for about 20 shillings, 2 pair silk shoes and cloggs a size bigger than ye shoes.

Your servant to command,
WILLIAM PEPPERRELL."

This letter was doubtless an order for a portion of Elizabeth's trousseau, as her marriage occurred the following June. Mistress Pepperrell was a noted belle and must have made a brave showing in the green padusoy and the white watered taby trimmed with gold lace. Her daughter, Mary Sparhawk, inherited her beauty and in 1770 was as great a belle as Elizabeth

had been in 1740. Many stories are told of the wit and fascination of Nathaniel Sparhawk's daughter, one of which has more than a passing interest.

Charles Warren Brewster, writing in 1850, says: "If the tale of tradition is true, to the beauty of Mary Sparhawk who became the wife of Dr. Jarvis, Portsmouth is more indebted for its protection in 1775 than to its forts. The story goes that Captain Mowatt of the *Canceaux*, a British ship of 16 guns, connected with a large armed ship, a schooner and a sloop, were off our harbor in the month of October, 1775. Captain Mowatt went privately on shore at Kittery Point and was received at the loyal house of Nathaniel Sparhawk. Here he became so much fascinated with Mary that the intent of his voyage to destroy Portsmouth was by her influence changed; and he made sail for Falmouth, now Portland, and burned more than 400 of the best houses and stores, leaving only about 100 of the poorest houses and they much damaged. How much our city is indebted to the beauty of Mary we can hardly estimate."

Mary Sparhawk's marriage was a notable event and celebrated with all the splendor befitting her father's station. And this brings us again to the staircase. The ceremony took place at the house, and the wedding party descended the beautiful broad steps built by the bride's grandfather.

Now that a staircase is considered so important a feature of house building, it is interesting to study Sir William's triumph from the purely architectural side. The beautiful lines of the balustrade, the admirable arrangement of the landings, and the unusual treatment of the spindles combine to produce a very satisfactory result. From every point of view it charms. There are no ugly angles, no uninteresting corners. It pleased Sir William when he designed it, and it pleases the most critical pilgrim to-day.

One modern house builder has copied the staircase line for line. At Newcastle, New Hampshire, in the summer home of William Niles, Esq., of Boston, its beauty has been so faithfully reproduced that Sir William himself would be deceived were he to

return to his old haunts. Not until his eyes rested on the wall paper, and he noted the absence of those classic domes and pillars ordered from London, would he realize that he was not in Elizabeth Sparhawk's house. After his first surprise was over, he could not fail to admire the taste of the man who had so perfectly reproduced his handiwork.

CHAPTER XIII

THE BOWDOIN PRINT

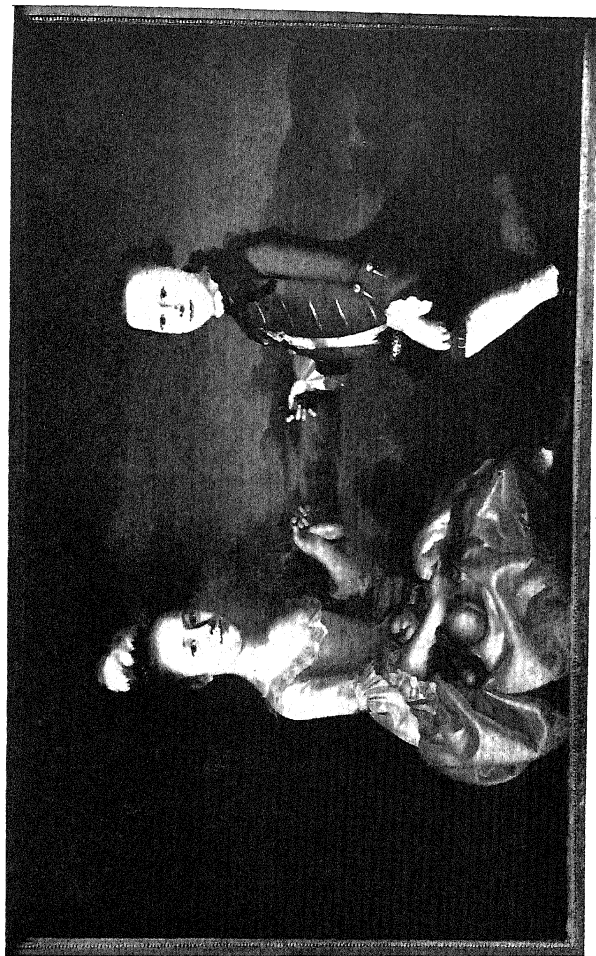
WHERE to open the tale of the Bowdoin print is a bit puzzling, but before going farther, the word "cotton" should be inserted, else something to frame and hang on the wall is suggested. This old print shows garden roses mellowed to the tones of an old tapestry, and in truth, I have seen hundreds of pictures not half so beautiful in color or line.

Whether to begin with the little antique shop where the precious yards of roses were purchased and work backwards, or start forth boldly with Elizabeth Bowdoin's household belongings and come down a hundred and fifty years is a question. The temptation is to begin with Elizabeth. Had I not discovered her portrait one day in the Walker Art Building of Bowdoin

College, the print might have leading place. As it is, little Elizabeth, in satin frock and lace ruffles, holding a pear in one hand, must come first.

With Mistress Elizabeth is her brother the Honorable James, a charming boy in velvet coat, knee breeches, ruffled waistcoat, and silver shoe buckles, — a miniature edition of his father, Governor Bowdoin. Beyond the children is a landscape background of the type dear to the painters of the eighteenth century. Unfortunately the artist is unknown, so tribute to this quaint canvas must be quite impersonal. The date is unrecorded, but the fact that James graduated from Harvard in 1771, at the age of nineteen, makes the approximate day comparatively easy to place. Moreover, Elizabeth's coiffure suggests the seventeen sixties.

If this were a serious tale of the Bowdoin family, brother would have to be mentioned first, for his achievements fill pages, while little sister's history is summed up in a few lines. That she married Sir John Temple, the English baronet, in 1775, is the most



By an unknown artist, in the Walker Art Gallery, Bowdoin College

ELIZABETH BOWDOIN, LATER LADY TEMPLE, AND HER BROTHER,
THE HONORABLE JAMES BOWDOIN

significant circumstance and quite the most interesting. She died, so runs the family record, in 1809, four years after James returned from an important diplomatic mission to Spain.

Elizabeth's father was one of the notable figures of his time, — twice governor of Massachusetts, president of the council which later framed the constitution, trustee of Harvard College, and many other things. The quelling of Shays' Rebellion in the second term of his office as governor, in 1786, was one of his important public acts. But these matters do not relate to his daughter's cotton print.

Near Elizabeth's picture hangs the portrait of the governor as a young man, painted in 1748 by Robert Feke—that early American artist whose brilliant and romantic career forms an interesting preface to the work of Copley, Stuart, and Trumbull. Very aristocratic of face and bearing is the governor, and lovely indeed the governor's lady, painted by Feke in the same year. There is a suggestion of Kneller's famous picture of Evelyn Byrd

of Virginia in this portrait of Elizabeth Erving Bowdoin. The gown is pale blue satin, stunningly painted, and in the long slender hands is held a crystal bowl filled with pink roses. Her daughter comes well by the beauty which, as Lady Temple, won for her considerable fame in London.

Little Elizabeth is surrounded by Bowdoin kin in paint and canvas. At the extreme left is her uncle, the Honorable William, half brother to the governor, almost as distinguished in face as that worthy and quite as much so in costume. Mrs. William, the beautiful Phœbe Murdock, hangs at his side, adorable in gray satin and white mull, her eighteenth century hands holding a small book, her dark hair rolled back and without powder, after the manner of the period.

Then there are the sprightly Judith, sister of the governor, a most captivating person in rose pink and fine lace; and Elizabeth's grandfather, James the first, a merchant of vast wealth, son of that gallant Pierre Baudouin who, leaving France in 1637,

sought first the shores of Casco Bay and later the more peaceful settlement of Boston. The portrait of this enterprising Bowdoin is a vigorous piece of brush work from the hand of Joseph Badger. And the very distinguished portrait by Gilbert Stuart of the very distinguished Honorable James, diplomat, must not be forgotten. But this does not end the family portraits nor begin to chronicle the priceless canvases of the room. The Honorable James, founder of Bowdoin College, not only gave six hundred acres of what was then good Massachusetts land, but in addition eleven hundred pounds sterling, the Island of Naushon in Buzzard's Bay, and his entire art gallery, which included many foreign and American masters. The old etchings alone are worth journeying many miles to see, and if it were not for the beguiling Elizabeth, her stately mother, her beautiful Aunt William, her captivating Aunt Judith, her highly interesting grandfather, her exceedingly important father, and her adorable brother, much might be said about this wonderful collection. But this would lead

far away from the cotton print which has already been kept waiting too long. After all, it is a simple circumstance hardly justifying so important an introduction. To come down from governors and diplomats to a mere bedspread is perhaps asking too much. It could not be thought of for a moment if Elizabeth, in selecting her household furnishings, had not given much thought to this particular pattern. How much of the fabric she took to England has not been recorded, but enough remained in the old Bowdoin house to deck half a dozen four-posters.

This is a story with a beginning and an end and many blank pages in the center. It is necessary to skip nearly a hundred and fifty years and take up the thread — which is entirely appropriate for a cotton material — in a musty, dusty little antique shop just around the corner from Boston's main thoroughfare. Here one day yards and yards of the faded garden roses were unearthed, together with other discarded articles which had once belonged to one of Massachusetts' proudest families. An

auktion had recently taken place in the dismantled rooms of an old mansion on Bowdoin Street, and the articles heaped on tables and chairs were the spoils of the junk man. The dwelling had long since passed out of the hands of the original owners, and little of real value had been secured, yet there was something pathetic, humorous, and decidedly incongruous about the circumstance. Most of the battered trophies were found in forgotten drawers and on high shelves, in the cellar, and in the attic. The print was far and away the most interesting of the motley assemblage, and that was in fragments. Yet, in spite of tatters, it was a charming and aristocratic thing in cotton. Much of it had to be discarded, but by piecing and patching, enough was reconstructed to make a covering for a low post bedstead and for curtains at two small windows. Now visitors who pull my latchstring ask first to see the Bowdoin print. Many are terribly disappointed. They expect a stunning old copperplate fabric such as many collectors are now seeking — mythological scenes or

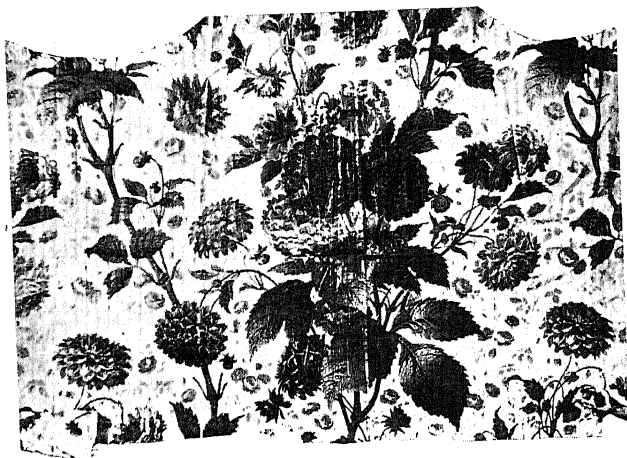
early Roman history — not just a long-lost flower garden.

It would have pleased me quite as much if Elizabeth had chosen the story of “Telemachus and Calypso” in dull blue or “The Siege of Troy” in mulberry, but it would be as presumptuous to dictate to a Bowdoin as to a Biddle. Besides Elizabeth lived a trifle too soon for the classic revival in cotton goods. Possibly she went shopping in the family coach; possibly grandfather James imported the material from Lisbon or Calcutta by way of France or England. Who can say at this late day just how the governor’s daughter acquired *my* window curtains and *my* low post bedstead counterpane. Possession being nine points in interest, speculations are idle.

In addition to Elizabeth’s cotton garden, I possess a dahlia chintz which equals in color the brightest fancy of a seedsman’s catalogue. On Bavarian soil grew this gay pattern, which time seems to make even more brilliant. Had not so much time been spent in looking at the Bowdoin portraits, the story of this old textile might



ELIZABETH'S PRINT



THE DAHLIA CHINTZ

be related. In the early nineteenth century it covered two armchairs, two long sofas, two small settees, and twelve side chairs. Some day I shall build a room around this chintz. It will be called the "Dahlia Room", and everything in it from the floor up and from the door knobs down will be planned expressly for this riotous fabric. Until that distant day it remains in an old ship's chest. Visitors draw it forth occasionally, and several post impressionists have attempted to transplant its vivid orange, true scarlet, deep crimson and clear blue-green to canvas. But the old German dyes are not to be reproduced in modern pigments.

On dark days or blue days one of the chair backs is sometimes fastened with thumb-tacks to my study wall. Only a confirmed pessimist could hold out long in the face of this joyous thing.

Highly prized in colonial times was every scrap of chintz, "patch" and imported calico.

"I bequeathe to my Niece Tabitha," reads one old document, "three silver

Porringers, a brass Trivet, and seven Lengths of best Lisbon Calicoe."

Portugal fabrics are not so famous now, and it behooves the collector of prints to search for these cottons. Sometimes charming bits are found in New England seaports. A few years ago, when an old house was rebuilt in a Massachusetts coast town, a bundle of calico pieces was found under the eaves in the attic. It was once the property of an aged spinster, long since dead, whose fame for "log-cabin" and "rising-sun" bedquilts was more than local. Tenants had come and gone, and the calicoes were not unearthed until an ambitious occupant decided to put a mansard roof on the building. Then the old pieces, picturesquely tied in a green beige shawl, were brought to light, together with several bandboxes covered with wall paper of most antiquated appearance. The people in the house cared nothing for the shawl, bandboxes, or prints, but they fell into the hands of an enthusiastic collector, who considered them treasures trove.

Among the pieces were two Lisbon prints

—one with a lavender ground on which pink rosebuds were scattered, the other having a bolder rose design in deeper colors on a very unusual shade of gray-blue. The other fragments were French, English, and early American, and set forth the fashions of the town for a period of sixty years.. All showed simple, strong designs and a wealth of color quite absent in modern cottons.

There were Manchester calicoes, calicoes from the Merrimac mills of Lowell, and a few bits unmistakably French in design. Whether these prints were all colored with vegetable dyes is a question, but the hard, flat qualities of modern chemicals were entirely lacking. This was particularly noticeable in the greens, the blues, and the deep yellows. The difference between the old and new methods of printing may partly account for the beauty of old cottons. The big factories have not time for the block process. They use copper cylinders — a separate cylinder for each color — and they are run with gigantic machinery that makes a cotton-manufacturing town the busiest, noisiest place in existence.

No textile has a more interesting history than the cotton print. The sacred books of India record the existence of hand-spun and dyed cloth eight hundred years before the birth of Christ. While the Chinese raised cotton as an ornamental plant in the court gardens, and the Egyptians regarded it as sacred, the Hindoos knew and practiced the art of cotton weaving centuries before it was known to the world outside.

Persia gained the knowledge, doubtless, from some Indian navigator, and from there it was carried into Turkey and Arabia. China was last of Asiatic countries to adopt the industry but achieved greatest fame. At first only the royal family wore the new fabric. The Emperor Ou-ti ascended the throne in robes of cotton instead of silk. It was not until the invasion of the Tartars that cotton spinning became general and the poorer classes could afford to dress in it.

The Greeks were familiar with cotton prints early in the second century, calling the material calicut, from the seaport in India by that name. The city of Calicut at

that time was famous for its commerce and its beautiful Brahmin temple. In the temple gardens grew shrubs of purple cotton, tended by the priests. The blossoms were sacred to Brahma, and were woven into altar cloths. The picking of the cotton, the spinning and the dyeing, were a religious ceremonial in which no profane hand could have a part. Calicut was the first Indian city visited by Europeans. In 1498 a Portuguese adventurer, Vasco da Gama, entered the harbor. When he returned to Lisbon, two years later, he gave such glowing accounts of the country that the king of Portugal attempted to conquer India. He sent out three thousand men, who invaded Calicut but were repulsed a few months later. The story of the brief occupancy of India by the Portuguese is not less remarkable than their sojourn in Japan. In the latter country they left behind them the recipe for sponge cake, which the clever Japs made their own. Only a few sailors returned to Lisbon from India but they carried with them a cargo of cotton, three hand

looms, and the art of spinning. Thus Portugal was the earliest of European countries to make cotton prints. Holland followed a hundred years later, gaining her information through the Dutch East India Company. England, now the greatest market of manufactured cotton in the world, knew nothing of the industry until late in the seventeenth century.

How long cotton cloth had been made in the western world it is impossible to say, but there is a tradition that Columbus sent a quantity of it to Queen Isabella, and it aroused almost as much curiosity as the natives who bore it. Cortez found the people of Mexico clad in garments that were neither of flax, wool, nor silk, and wrote of the wonderful plant with white blossoms.

In comparing old prints of Mexico with those of India, a striking resemblance is seen. Not only are the designs similar, but the colors are much the same. In both, vegetable dyes are used, which give them a depth and softness unknown in modern cottons.

Collecting these old fabrics is a pleasant pastime. Many of the fragments may be put to actual use; others are interesting to look over when placed in portfolios. Old cotton prints will never equal in value old laces, yet there is the same personal interest underlying both.

CHAPTER XIV

QUICKSILVER AND MUCH FINE GILDING

IN collecting there are many things which can be assigned to definite periods. Either by their outlines or decoration they proclaim their country and century. There are other articles equally old, which are not easy of identification. They developed on more independent lines, and do not, on first acquaintance, reveal their day and generation. Mirrors are in that class; also screens; and the list might be extended to include other articles of furnishings, sometimes termed movable fitments.

In hunting old mirrors or, more correctly speaking, old looking-glasses, several styles are encountered which are difficult to place. American Empire specimens, with their straight tops and painted landscapes, are not puzzling, neither are the well-known

Chippendale and Adam types ; but Sheraton and Hepplewhite designs are sometimes perplexing, while early eighteenth and late seventeenth century examples have been known to baffle well-known curators.

Often decorators are in doubt as to the correct mirror treatment of period rooms, particularly when oak styles are under consideration. Yet the fascinations of mirrors are many, and not the least of their attractions are the interesting questions they sometimes raise.

One can really become quite sentimental over a collection of these old articles. What interesting costumes and scenes are brought to mind and almost to view by Charles II mirrors ! If these battered sheets of glass and mercury enclosed in wooden frames could give back their impressions, what valuable commentaries they would be on the life of their times ! Not only of people but of woodwork, furniture, and all those interior fitments which decorators of to-day construct with such infinite pains.

Furnishing an interior by the aid of the seventeenth-century mirrors, assisted by

imagination, is interesting work, nor is it seeing in the glass darkly. Some of the impressions are wonderfully clear. The costumes are highly attractive. They have a brilliancy of color well tuned to the richness of oak paneling and oak furniture. Perukes are brown, that being the color of the royal wig. We miss a certain distinction found in the dress of the next century, but there is a greater picturesqueness. Turning back the calendar a hundred years, we find a ruder manner of living, but a splendid color note in costumes and background. There is less refinement, but something very fascinating in this Tudor century. Impressions, so far as mirrors are concerned, are a little blurred.

There is a tradition that Queen Elizabeth used only such mirrors as made her look young and interesting, that they were prepared especially for her, and that no "true" glass was ever permitted to find its way to her presence. It is a matter of regret that further information is not at hand, some hint of where the glasses were made, details of the life of the maker, or,

best of all, a formula from which such highly desirable articles could now be manufactured. Perhaps it is useless to try to fathom out just what the mirrors of Elizabeth's time were like. Possibly they reached Her Majesty from Venice, for that city of glass magicians sent representatives to the English courts.

There is not a great deal of information at hand regarding the history and evolution of the looking-glass. Polished steel served during a long period. Next followed the small hand mirror, probably of Venetian origin; and gradually the wall mirror, as we now know it, came into being. French and Italian mirrors had reached a high degree of beauty long before English designers realized their possibilities.

A search for old specimens, even in the big museums, reveals the fact that there are few examples earlier than Charles II's day.

The Stuart types seem to be of two general styles, — those which are nearly square except for the ornamental top, and those so long and narrow that they suggest the probability of being designed for special

places. It may be doubted if they were a part of the permanent fitments of rooms during the Jacobean period. They were movable, as were most of the really luxurious things of life. So far as the decorative treatments of walls were concerned, French designers of the seventeenth century were far ahead of the English. It was not until the early Georgian period, when Grinling Gibbons and his fellow-workers achieved notable results in the decorative treatments of walls, that mirrors were used in a purely ornamental way.

Robert Adam quickly comes to mind when eighteenth-century designers are mentioned; also Thomas Sheraton. Both used mirrors in a way that Chippendale and Hepplewhite did not attempt, although the detached glasses of the latter men are among the finest things of their kind in existence.

Distinctions were carefully made in the eighteenth century. Mirrors were of the convex order, very ornamental — *girandoles*, to be exact — while looking-glasses were more utilitarian, usually long and

narrow and harking back to a far earlier origin. These distinctions have lost much of their original meaning. We speak of mirrors in a general way, meaning everything in mercury and glass. Many collectors, particularly in this country, call the long and narrow specimens looking-glasses and the horizontal, mantel types, mirrors. Those who are very exact confine the latter term to circular girandoles, but it is only in months of searching that a genuine one is found. Consequently the word may be correctly used only a few times in a year. Meanwhile "mirror" comes easily, far more so than "looking-glass", which bears out the theory of a certain English connoisseur that American collectors prefer to call their possessions by wrong names.

Most of the mirrors picked up in the shops are of the early nineteenth century, when the long rectangular frame with a painted landscape on the top was much in vogue. While these old objects are interesting and often of considerable beauty, they do not equal in value those of an earlier period.

In dividing old looking-glasses into different classes, several difficulties are immediately encountered. "Eagle mirrors" belong to one very large class but cover several different types. Chippendale used the eagle in a masterly way, perhaps most successfully in the real girandole mirrors. We also find him using this bird in connection with elaborately carved mirror frames of mahogany, in which the eagle alone is gilded. There are many variations of this theme, one simple type being very well known in this country.

Then there are the "Constitution" mirrors, in which the American eagle is used in various ways. Genuine "Constitutions" are valuable and are perhaps as desirable as any eagle mirror that an American collector could have. The real Constitution must not be confounded with that scarce American Empire mirror, the "Constitution and Guerriere." Such confusion has happened at auction sales, with much attendant annoyance, embarrassment, and amusement.

An old looking-glass showing a spirited

painting of this important naval skirmish of the War of 1812 is quite a different article from a mahogany framework topped with a rampant eagle in gold.

The "picture glass" is nineteenth and seventeenth and occasionally eighteenth century. The cabinetmakers of the latter century used the scheme, though preferring urns and garlands and other typical *motifs*. It is possible sometimes to determine the maker by the urn. Adam, Sheraton, and Hepplewhite used the urn with great skill. Some of the most charming specimens of the late eighteenth century show this finish. The urn in a lower, broader way is found on Queen Anne specimens.

Thomas Sheraton, who was a decorator and upholsterer quite as much as a furniture maker, has given advice about the use of mirrors in relation to wall treatment.

Some of Sheraton's comments are interesting. The following is taken from his book:

"In elegant rooms, the chimney-glass is usually carried to the under side of the cornice of the ceiling; but to reduce the

expense of the plate, sometimes a broadish panel is introduced at the top of the glass with a frieze and cornice above all, included in the frame of the glass.

“The most generally approved pilasters for chimney and pier-glasses are those of reeds, worked bold; but which, in my opinion, still look better by being parted with a ground one-third of the width of the reed which may be matted to relieve the burnished reeds. It is not unusual to have a twisting branch of flowers, or a ribband round the reeds rising upwards, and terminating in some sort of Composite, Corinthian or Ionic capital. The panel above the glass is sometimes made quite plain and covered with silk as a ground for drapery, tacked under the cornice of the glass to match that of the windows.”

“Glasses for chimney-pieces run various, according to the size of the fireplace, and the height of the wall above. To save expense, they are sometimes fitted up in three plates, and the joints of the glass covered with small gilt mouldings or pilasters. At other times with the naked joint only.

When they are of one plate, the frame in general is made bolder and more elegant."

In an old house in lower New York are four beautiful mirrors representing different periods. A writer of colonial romances once fitted out the house with four ghosts which nightly stepped from the mirrors and wandered at will through the rooms. From the "Bilboa" frame flitted a ghost equipped with all the earmarks of an eighteenth-century story — powdered queue, lace ruffles, silver shoe buckles, and jeweled snuffbox. This imposing shade was a restless spirit. He had little in common with the gentleman of the French Empire mirror, and still less with the little maid from the Queen Anne looking-glass. With the fourth ghost, an early daughter of the Revolution, who dwelt within the Constitution frame, he was on better terms. By day they all took flight, and the most expectant visitor saw merely glass and quicksilver, mahogany and walnut, and much fine gold decoration.

The "Bilboa" specimen is a remarkably fine one of its class. At the top of the frame, and forming a beautiful finial, is the gilt urn

of flowers which is one of the characteristics of the true "Bilboa." The flowers are wired and quite flexible. The arched top is ornamented with gold, while the frame next the glass is gold lined.

Although "Bilboa" is the general name for mirrors of this class, the origin of the word is not very clear. In the seaport towns of New England the term was first applied to looking-glasses brought back from foreign shores. "Bilboa" in the Bay of Biscay was the traditional port from which these beautiful objects came. The first "Bilboas" had other distinguishing features, namely, veneers of marble, etc., but to-day it is the wired flowers to which collectors pin their faith.

Mirrors and clocks fill a middle ground between heavy pieces of furniture and the small objects which fascinate many collectors. They are important accessions in furnishing a house in colonial style. A well-placed mirror gives a certain charm to an old-fashioned room that nothing else will, and no dwelling, old or new, is complete without the friendly tick of an old clock.

CHAPTER XV

FRIENDLY FURNITURE

MANY people who are not collectors find it hard to resist the charms of old chairs; also numerous individuals, unmoved by rare mahogany, are greatly attracted by rush and cane. Old rush chairs, for instance, are so friendly and approachable, so entirely comfortable. Windsors alone can compete with them for everyday, hard usage. They are in the same class socially, claiming no drawing-room associations, yet if the truth be told, outlasting many finer types.

While rush is often, — not always, — plebeian, cane belongs to the aristocracy. "Royalty" is a better word, — for Charles II, James II, Louis XVI, and other sovereigns come to mind at the mere word "cane", while "rush" often suggests English cottages and New England farmhouses.

Rush furniture comes to us in many guises. It takes the form of old "ladder-backs" found in quantities in New England, of quaint, painted chairs with rush seats made in the early part of the nineteenth century, of fiddle and spoon-back chairs in mahogany and walnut of the early eighteenth century, also of more mixed styles; lastly it comes in numerous cottage forms of simple design.

Old pieces are still to be found, and their charm is undeniable. The dust of countless attics seems to cling to the corners, while invisible cobwebs are plainly seen by the imaginative. In many old houses where rush chairs are not actual "attic properties", they may be found in the "kitchen" or even the "woodshed", and no ignominy quite equals the latter status. An attic has picturesque if dusty traditions, but no romance clusters about a New England woodshed.

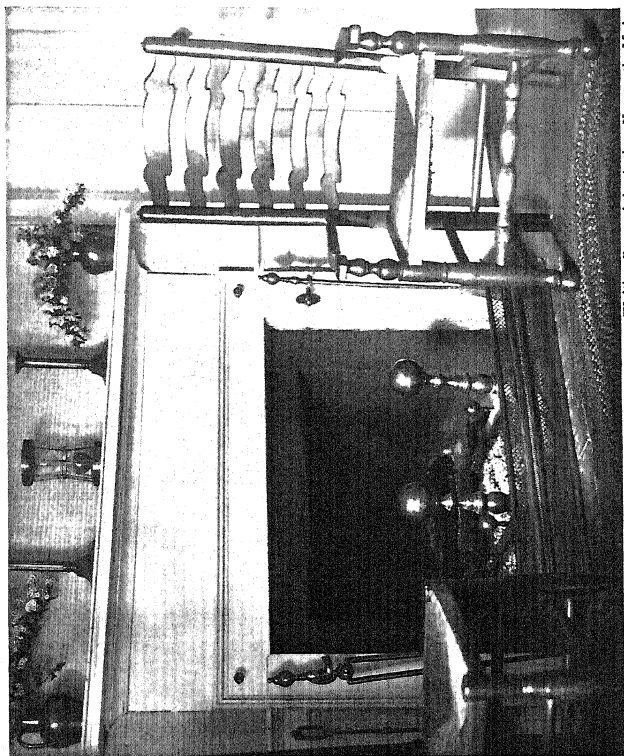
The old rush pieces are now coming once more into their own. Frost and mildew have done their worst; conditions which would have ruined finer things have

blighted, but not annihilated. Underneath the old paint the wood is well preserved. Possibly the old seats are still intact. If so, soap and water and olive oil will give them renewed life. If too far gone for this simple restoration, new seats may be added. No matter how dilapidated, they are well worth rescuing. They may be prizes dating back a century, but the chances are that the woodshed pieces belong to the early nineteenth, when rush in this country and England had a great vogue.

Thomas Sheraton in his later days used rush extensively in his cheaper painted pieces. Chairs and settees with rush seats and charmingly decorated frames, believed to be his, are found occasionally in this country and rank with the most interesting things in the painted line which the average collector runs across. The higher grade of painted furniture, combined with cane, is seldom found in the usual avenues of collecting. Many collectors own such pieces, but they have been purchased in the old country or ordered through expensive shops here. This unique and beautiful furniture does

not seem to have been imported to any extent at the time of its origin. It was a costly luxury then and has never been at any time of moderate price.

Cane furniture is a separate story from rush, with even an older history — though rush seats go back a long, long way. Occasionally a rush chair of the early seventeenth century is seen — heavy of design and bearing every indication that the seat is as old as the oak of the frame. This type, found in the museums of New England and the South, and now and then in private collections, is of the early turned variety which followed closely on the all oak or “wainscot chair.” In Pilgrim Hall, Plymouth, is a specimen of this class, once the property of Elder Brewster, now rounding out a third century in company with Rose Standish’s sampler, the ship chest of Miles Standish, and the table of Governor Carver. Such specimens, however, cannot be taken as any way typical of what a quest for old rush furniture would yield. The painted pieces of the early nineteenth century and the older ladder or banister backs form the



Writing Room of the Author, Yarmouth, Maine

OLD LADDER-BACK RUSH CHAIRS OF ENGLISH OAK

larger portion of what one may expect to unearth, together with here and there a really fine chair of mahogany or walnut in Queen Anne style. The latter are the gems of the old rush pieces — if of walnut, probably made during Anne's reign, 1702-1714; if of mahogany, of a little later date, but quite in the Queen Anne manner. Charming indeed are these old specimens, with fiddle back, cabriole leg and flat-foot — variously known as "duck", "web", and "camel." This particular furniture extremity went out of fashion as the ball-and-claw grew in favor. Hepplewhite tried to revive it in several exquisite little sewing tables, but late eighteenth-century London would have none of it — and it really did not belong to the designing of that day. It did, however, fit its own brief period perfectly; so well, in fact, that there seems little reason to graft it on another.

The rush seats of Queen Anne chairs are of superior workmanship and in many cases as well preserved as the frames. New rush does not always have this resistance to time and wear. A great deal of so-called rush is

composition, though entirely lifelike on the surface. Paper, twisted and dried and otherwise treated, is the basis of many a new rush seat. There are shops where real "rush seating" is done, but there seems to be a secret brotherhood about the craft difficult to penetrate. Chair frames may be left in the care of many dealers and after a while, a long while, they come back like new. If one is willing to wait and to go to the expense, "real rush" is guaranteed. With fine chairs this is well worth while. When the frames are mahogany, walnut, or chestnut, the best is not too fine, and with the more interesting of the painted pieces, the real is still the wiser choice. With the old "ladder-backs", which in their best days were for common and hard usage, perhaps the paper — but that must be left to the collecting conscience, sometimes extremely sensitive on such points. Where a chair is frankly new, merely old in design, the paper rush does not seem so incongruous. It seems to be merely a part of the modern scheme of things, like the jam in one of Lewis Carroll's stories — merely *called* jam.

The possibilities of rush furniture, whether old or new, are considerable. Suppose the pieces chosen are of the painted variety of the early nineteenth century — say dining-room chairs, painted black, decorated in grapes in gold and other soft tones, and having seats of finely woven rush, a little green in hue. Chairs of this type are sometimes found with cane seats; but they are not quite so desirable and so we confine ourselves to rush. These chairs are splendidly adapted to a country dining room, to a dining room in an apartment, and under some conditions, to a city house. One clever craftsman, beginning with six chairs, had a round table made to order, painted it black and decorated it with a border of grapes, leaves and tendrils, cleverly imitating the chairs. The walls were hung in an old-fashioned block-printed paper copied from one of the rooms in the Wadsworth-Longfellow house, Portland, and obtained from a dealer who makes a specialty of reproducing old designs. The chairs were old, but everything else in the room was new, even to the peasant china on

the table, but so well chosen that no in-harmony was felt. It was a delightful place, the envy of many visitors and convincing proof that the new may sometimes be combined with the old; also if you cannot have all old be glad of half old, working toward a gradual weeding out process which will mean *all old* in time.

In the *Boston News Letter* of the third week of November, 1779, was inserted the following bid for patronage: "Windsors to match any set, mahogany in diverse Patterns with choice of stuffed work, also Rush Bottoms in great variety. Old Chairs needing new Rush Bottoms Mended on exchange. Mousetraps and Ladies' Gloves. Likewise Wax Works to order."

CHAPTER XVI

HUNTING HIGHBOYS

SOONER or later the old furniture quest leads to a highboy. The way may begin with a broken chair and lead, by gentle stages, to sideboards and four-posters, but there is no escaping the highboy in the end. Frequently it becomes the one thing needed for perfect happiness. I once heard a lover of old furniture say that his house would not be complete until there was a tall clock on the stair landing and a highboy in the upper hall. "You know," he added, "highboys belong in upper halls." And if one has an old upper hall or a modern one in the old manner, it is truly an excellent place. Yet it would be a pity to limit the old furniture habit to those fortunate people with roomy second stories.

The highboy was an outgrowth of the chest, as were the dresser, the credence, and the cupboard. Old illuminations show the chest in its various stages of coffer, seat, and bench. When sidepieces and a back were added, the settle was evolved. When elevated on a trestle, the chest became the cupboard; when filled with shelves, it approached the dresser. By a little imagination, nearly every article of furniture may be traced to the chest. During the Middle Ages, it was the poor man's chief possession, forming a bed at night, a seat by day, and a strong box at all times. When more peaceful conditions prevailed, the chest, as a coffer or locker, lost its significance. In Anglo-Saxon times, the home of the thane contained little furniture. Stools were the seats in common use; tables were made of boards laid on trestles; cupboards were extremely primitive, and bedsteads were scarcely more than pallets of straw, protected by skins of beasts. After the Norman conquest, a gradual change took place in English house-furnishing. The comforts which had been known on the

continent for a long period were introduced by William and his followers.

The chest of drawers, as we know it to-day, was not evolved until the sixteenth century. Cupboards, presses, and armoires met the requirements. With the sixteenth century, a different mode of living came into existence. The old feudal life of the Middle Ages was gone. Houses were more comfortable and built with a greater regard for privacy. The bedroom, as a distinct feature of house building, was little known before this time. When this room assumed a distinct character, furniture was especially designed for it, and among the new pieces was the chest of drawers.

Of early chests of drawers, Italian specimens are the best examples of handicraft. They contain four drawers, elevated on short feet. The carving is simple, and in the manner of the early Renaissance. Arabesques, garlands, shields, and masks replaced the quatrefoils and cinquefoils of the Gothic period. The ball-foot was a feature of furniture making during the late sixteenth century. It is found on presses, cupboards,

and chests of drawers. When the ball and claw came into general use, the chest of drawers, together with kindred pieces of furniture, developed on new lines. The ball-and-claw foot and the cabriole leg were destined to revolutionize furniture making and to prepare the way for the fine cabinetwork of the eighteenth century, in which both England and France had a part.

England obtained the cabriole, or bandy leg, from Holland, late in the seventeenth century. The accession of William of Orange in 1688 was followed by an exodus of Dutch and Flemish workmen, who carried with them a more perfect craft than was known across the Channel. Flemish cane-work had already influenced chairmaking. Dutch marquetry and wood carving now became popular. The bandy leg added lightness and grace to the chest of drawers, elevating it from the ground, and giving opportunity for a different scheme of construction.

The early bandy leg of English designing terminated in the flat or club foot, sometimes called the "web foot." This type

may be studied in chairs of the period, and also in chests of drawers and desks. It was not until about 1730 that this motif in furniture making reached America. Up to that day the heavier styles of the seventeenth century continued to be in favor.

In the colonies the chest of drawers developed on two distinct lines: one resulted in the bureau; the other in the "highboy." The first was the direct outgrowth of the chest; the other was of a more complicated origin. The chest, pure and simple, was one of the earliest of colonial pieces. Ship chests were brought over in numbers by the passengers of the *Mayflower*. It is safe to say that these were plain, or, if decorated at all, in a very simple manner.

Following in the wake of the chest came the chest with a drawer beneath. Convenience soon demanded a second drawer. When a third was added, and the piece of furniture was elevated on short feet, it had grown from a chest *with* drawers to a chest *of* drawers, and the colonial bureau was at hand. Early chests of drawers were plain,

like the chests, but, late in the century, two or three styles of ornament became common and occur so frequently as to be easily classified. One was the rounded arch mentioned in connection with the early desk and Bible boxes. Another was a primitive "all-over" carving in leaves and flowing lines, called, in a general way, "Hadley", from the fact that many specimens of this work have been found in and about Hadley, Massachusetts. A third style consisted of "egg" and "drop" ornaments, fastened to a plain surface and stained or painted in another color from the background. Pan-eled effects were still in use, but their popularity had waned with the introduction of walnut, which was less adapted for panel-work than oak.

The high chest of drawers, or highboy, was known in the colonies in the late seventeenth century. It stood on six turned feet connected by a stretcher and was more useful than beautiful. When the cabriole leg reached America it transformed the highboy. The turned feet and heavy stretchers disappeared. When the scroll top or broken

pediment came into use, another change was wrought in the highboy.

"Highboy" is a comparatively modern word; "high-chest" is the term which was long used to designate all chests of drawers elevated on four or more feet. "Tallboy" is heard in England but not often here.

When walnut followed oak, an intermediate period in furniture making set in, forming a middle ground between heavy pieces of oak and graceful designs in mahogany.

One highboy, greatly valued, shows the massive frame, the turned legs, the peculiar arrangement of drawers, characteristic of the early variety. Both Italian and Dutch influences are apparent, but it is an English adaptation of the type. Highboys of this style are not often offered for sale, unless some private collection comes under the hammer. People fortunate enough to inherit such pieces seldom care to part with them, and the chance of running across one in an antique shop is remote. Reproductions of this variety are seldom attempted, and the risk of purchasing a new one by

mistake is hardly within the range of possibilities. The owner may rest secure that his six-legged highboy or his four-legged highboy of the type described is really old.

When a furniture maker copies an old highboy, he usually selects the cabriole variety. A fine reproduction costs almost as much as an old one. An expert cabinet-maker (and only an expert should attempt a highboy) will reproduce all the fine points. Moldings and drawer pulls will be in perfect harmony, and the tone of the wood will be the yellow-brown of the early eighteenth century, not the purplish-red mahogany of a later date. If of the earlier cabriole period, the highboy will be straight on the top, and the molding will have the character of a cornice. The upper portion will be divided into four long drawers and a square center drawer, showing a "full" sunburst. The lower division or frame will usually contain one long drawer and three sub-drawers, the center one showing a fan or "half sunburst." The legs will be slender cabriole type, terminating in the web or club foot.

With this style of high-chest in the old days was often sold a set of "steps" for china. The steps were placed on top of the chest and on first glance seemed a part of the design. When filled with pitchers, jugs, and bowls, it became an object of housewifely pride. Outwardly was displayed the treasured china of the household; inside, folded in the long drawers, was the family linen. Time has dealt kindly with many of the old highboys, but the steps and the china are left to the imagination.

The high-chest of 1740 presented a different appearance. The divisions of frame and body were much the same, and the drawers held to similar dimensions, but the flat cornice was gone, and the handles and key plates were altered. In place of the straight cornice was the scroll top, destined to be an important feature of furniture making, both in England and America. The scroll or swan top, or broken pediment, as it is sometimes called, continued to be a characteristic phase of furniture making until late in the eighteenth century.

By 1750 the highboy became more diffi-

cult of classification. The type was growing complex. On one hand was the secretary, retaining many features of the high-chest; on the other the evolution of the bureau, which was in reality a direct outgrowth of the low chest of drawers, yet combining many of the highboy features. Then there was the true highboy, resembling the earlier type, yet showing a more elaborate scroll and a more curving cabriole. The top or knee of the cabriole, once quite plain, now showed a curved shell, while fancy scrollwork replaced the simple sunburst. Carved finials and ornamental brass work kept pace with other innovations. To many minds the later highboys represent the highest type; there are others who prefer the highboy of 1730, just as they prefer the clock of that date.

When cabinetmakers used the straight cornice, clockmakers followed in their lead. When the scroll top became a feature of high-chests, clocks soon responded, and in a lesser degree this was true of all types of woodwork. It is this close relation between designs, this kinship, so to speak, of all

eighteenth-century handicraft, that makes the study of colonial furniture so fascinating. One collector may prefer the plainer style, another waxes eloquent over the elaborately carved pieces, but all must agree that it was a golden age of cabinetmaking, in which beauty of design was only half the story.

Open the old drawers and note how careful the interior finish! How smooth the wood! How perfect the constructive work! Note the treatment of the wood; the durability of the stain; the care bestowed upon the hidden parts. Yet we wonder why old pieces have lasted so long. Only those who have made long sojourns in New England farmhouses know anything about the base ends to which many old pieces are put. Then there is the other extreme, more disconcerting to the would-be purchaser, when the old chest of drawers, usually of maple or applewood, and possibly pine, plainly of local make and not of thrilling interest, is placed in the best parlor, valued at a price which would almost buy the farm, and placidly declared to have come over in the *Mayflower*. Those are occasions

when the hunter of old furniture finds silence the better part of valor.

Possibly in the next town there is a dealer in antiques who has scoured the country as you can never do, who is master of an art you can never attain. He has all kinds of old things from foot stoves to churns, and his prices are comparatively moderate. By contrast, the simple farmhouse people seem members of a gigantic furniture trust. He will sell you an old highboy, — possibly the very one you saw last year in the farmhouse parlor, — and tell you its entire history. He has powers of persuasion which you unfortunately lack, and which he turns to account.

What fine old chairs, quaint pewter, and beautiful china these country dealers sometimes have! Windsor chairs and painted chairs of the late Sheraton period, all kinds and conditions of bureaus, and occasionally a very rare old piece which museum curators would journey far to secure.

CHAPTER XVII

BAYBERRY CANDLE AND TALLOW DIP

WE have made many improvements in our manner of living since the days of our forefathers, but, as yet, we have found no satisfactory substitutes for firelight and candlelight. Methods of heating and lighting, when viewed from scientific standpoints, have progressed wonderfully; backlogs and tallow dips are quite outclassed. But, if the other side of the question be considered, we may regret the extreme convenience of steam radiators and electric-light fixtures. Pressing a button or turning a coil will not quicken either log or candle.

The colonial revival — may it never pass — has brought candlelight again into fashion. The fireplace has become a feature of all modern building, and its root in our hearts and homes is too deeply

fixed to be called a matter of fashion. But candlelight is as yet only an occasional blessing.

Candles at the dinner table are an everyday affair. Hidden under shades of silk and fringe, and adjusted by means of a celluloid tube, they are hardly recognized. Their simplicity is gone, and they might be little electric lights, so far as beauty and poetry are concerned. A candle is at its best in an old candlestick — brass, pewter, or silver, — standing on a mahogany table, with snuffers and tray near at hand. If white painted woodwork and such old-time accessories as samplers and silhouettes are in evidence, so much the better, but they are not essential. The charm of a candlestick is that it fits so well into every background. It is like a well-bred guest, at home in any environment.

Candlestick collecting is one of the pleasantest hobbies in existence. It does not require a fortune; it does not demand a house. It is a useful hobby. Samplers, for instance, cannot by any stretch of the imagination be regarded in the light of

household necessities. A collection of tea-pots cannot be classed under the head of the purely useful. At most, only two or three can be in active service. Candlesticks cannot break; herein they have the advantage over glass and china. They are not affected by dampness, never fade, nor can moth and rust corrupt. Candlestick collecting does not require travel. The finest old brass stick in the world may be lurking in the junkshop around the corner. There are so many reasons why one should acquire candlesticks. A final reason is, that they never get out of order. They are the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.

Of all old sticks, those which we inherit we most dearly prize. There is something extremely human about a brass or silver candle holder which has stood a century of service in one family. Old furniture must be "done over" in order to make it presentable, but the old stick, except for occasional cleaning, remains unchanged. Now that tallow and bayberry candles are made by clever craftsmen, the candlestick can burn in the same old way.

Bayberry candles give forth a sweet, pungent odor when snuffed, but the same cannot be said of tallow candles, which call to mind a smoking beefsteak. Bayberry dips are a light, greenish brown, tapering slightly at the end. They burn with a beautiful starry gleam, and should never be desecrated by shades. For the Christmas table, and for colonial teas and other patriotic gatherings, nothing could be more appropriate than bayberry tapers.

Old silver sticks are seldom found in set outside of private collections, and one must search far for a perfectly matched set in auction room or antique shop. Silver candlesticks were never inexpensive and were seldom found in families of moderate means. They were reserved for the parlor,—brass, pewter, and iron being in use in other rooms.

Silver candlesticks and silver porringers are often mentioned in old wills and inventories. Orders were sent abroad — usually to London — for “newest patterns in candleware.” Washington was very fastidious about his china and silver. Thomas Jeffer-

son's love of simplicity did not interfere with his liking for well-designed and richly ornamented candlesticks. In the spacious parlor of Monticello a pair of branch candlesticks is still preserved. The dining room contains a beautiful candle-chandelier, filled with tapers and burned on occasions. Monticello is now owned by the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Foundation.

In connection with this old mansion, a description written in the diary of Marquis de Chastellux, then commanding the French forces in America, is of interest. This distinguished Frenchman is chiefly known in this country by the pleasant things he jotted down in his diary about American houses and American women.

"This house, of which Mr. Jefferson was the architect, and often one of the workmen, is extremely elegant, and in the Italian taste, though not without fault. It consists of a large square pavilion, the entrance to which is by two porticoes, ornamented with pillars. The ground floor consists chiefly of a very large, lofty salon, which is decorated entirely in the antique style;

above it is a library of the same form. Two wings, with only a ground floor and attic story, are joined to the pavilion and communicate with the kitchen offices, etc., which form a basement under a terrace."

Jefferson seems to have made a special point of illumination. The first Argand burner imported into this country is said to have been used at Monticello.

The candlestick collector of modest purse will not sigh for old silver and Sheffield plate, for fire-gilt and jingling prisms; but turn attention to brass, which offers the finest field. Colonial sticks and Russian sticks in hammered, cast, and spun brass may be found in out-of-the-way corners. They are not very plentiful, but no true collector wants his hobby to become general.

Reproductions of old designs are not to be seriously regarded, but one or two good modern candlesticks in copper or bronze will not clash with the old. They will be old in another generation, and will be regarded as characteristic specimens of the metal-work of our day.

CHAPTER XVIII

A WORD ABOUT SHEFFIELD

It was in 1740 that Thomas Bolsover, a Sheffield mechanic, discovered that copper and silver could be fused in such a manner that the former metal could be completely coated with the purer one, thus presenting to the eye the appearance of silver. The story runs that Bolsover was repairing a knife made of copper and silver when he made this discovery, which was destined to influence the silver trade of all England, and to transform Sheffield from an insignificant town to a great commercial center.

Bolsover confined his invention to snuff-boxes and buttons. Thomas Hancock, who followed him, and who reaped the benefits of his industry, enlarged the scope of the work, making many articles of use and

beauty which had hitherto been found only in silver. Trays, cake baskets, candlesticks, tea and coffee urns, loving-cups, mugs, beakers, tea sets and coffee sets, lamps, épergnes, coasters, and fruit baskets, were among the graceful pieces which Hancock and his contemporaries made. From Sheffield the industry spread to other towns, Birmingham ranking second. Early Sheffield has several distinct characteristics which render it unlike its imitations and are sufficient to prove its genuineness. As Sheffield trays are famous, a tray is a good thing to cite. If the embossed border of the tray is sterling, if the plain "plate" or shield in the center is of silver, also, if the joints are wrapped or covered with the same metal, the tray is of the early period. The same tests may be made with other pieces, such as cake baskets, teapots, mugs, etc.

Old Sheffield is now very scarce, and like most rare things, is extremely valuable. A tray, meeting all the requirements, is quite as valuable as if made of sterling silver. Collectors in this country do not

often encounter old trays. There are trays of copper, plated with silver, and many of them are old in a vague acceptance of the term, but they are not "old Sheffield", strictly speaking, for that term implies Sheffield made during the "first" period. Later, the sterling borders and shields were discarded. Borders were made of composition, and lacked the sharpness and delicacy of the earlier ones. Pieces thus decorated could be sold at a lower figure. The ware was slowly becoming commercialized.

Cake baskets, coasters, and candlesticks are the Sheffield articles most frequently encountered. Few of the baskets have silver borders; the coasters are rarely ornamented with silver; the candlesticks are usually so worn that the copper foundation is more prominent than the silver. All these pieces are desirable, but they are not early Sheffield, and should not be purchased for such. These articles are invariably fine in design, and when cleaned and replated are valuable additions to the table or sideboard. When articles are to be used, they should be replated. From the collector's

standpoint, they are more interesting in the worn condition. It may be said here that Sheffield plate of the early period seldom shows the copper. The silver is so thick that a century and a half of wear have made little impression upon it. The article was a thing of beauty when it came from the silversmith's hand, and as such it will remain.

Few people possess these rare pieces unless their collecting days date back at least a score of years. But the later pieces, provided they are handmade, are worthy of attention. The new trays and candlesticks that masquerade as old should be avoided.

The process of making old Sheffield plate was well described a few years ago by Mr. Arnold T. Watson, president of the Sheffield Literary and Philosophical Society, in an address on the "Silver Trade of Sheffield", delivered before an assembly of silversmiths. Mr. William Watson, in his valuable book, "Pewter and Sheffield Plate", gives a portion of the address. The method of making the old plate is told in such a

lucid manner that the following paragraphs in Mr. Watson's own words are given :

“A bar or ingot of copper, varying from one inch to one and one half inches in thickness by two and one half inches in breadth, and of any length, according to the size of the article to be made, was taken, and the surface or surfaces to be plated were well filed, scraped, or planed with a machine constructed on the principle of a joiner's plane, until perfectly clean, even, and free from blemishes. A sheet of silver varying in thickness from a sixteenth to one-half inch or more, of the same size as the metal plate to which it was to be united, was then likewise filed, etc., until perfectly clean and even. The two cleaned surfaces were then placed together, the greatest care being taken to avoid fingering them. A plate of copper about one-sixteenth of an inch thick, slightly less in size than the silver, was then placed upon it, and lastly upon the whole was placed a piece of strong iron nearly the length of the ingot, about an inch broad and one-quarter of an inch thick to receive the pressure of the iron

wire. These various plates were then tied firmly and closely together with strong iron wire, twisted, so as to keep them in position during the process of soldering in the fire. The edges of the silver were then touched around with a solution of borax and water, and when dry the bar was ready for the plating furnace. Heat was then applied in a reverberatory furnace until the silver was seen to flow and be in a state of fusion round the edges, which the borax as a flux greatly facilitated. The whole was then quickly removed from the furnace by means of tongs, so constructed as to clasp the sides of the metal without pressing upon the surface, as too much heat or the slightest pressure when in this state would cause the silver to run off and spoil the piece.

“The ingot, which was thus plated, was gradually cooled, and placed in strong pickle of spirits of salt or spirits of vitriol and water to free it from borax and the dirt of the furnace, after which it was well scoured with Calais sand and water. It was then rinsed and dried, and the metal sent to the rollers or the forge-hammer to

be drawn out to the desired thickness and dimensions. The ingot was rolled cold, and during the process frequent annealing was, of course, necessary to prevent its becoming brittle. The sheet, when of required thickness, was cut into the shape suitable for the article to be made, edges or parts being joined together at a moderate heat with solder, borax, and sandiver, formerly a product of the glass-furnace, being used as fluxes.

“About the year 1784, Mr. George Cadman introduced a very valuable improvement in plate manufacture, by soldering silver edges and mounts on plated ware.”

If these facts are borne in mind, many of the doubts regarding the age of Sheffield plate will be removed.

CHAPTER XIX

PRINTS — A PASTIME

THE New England spare room of the eighteen-seventies — lean as well as spare — usually boasted a few works of art, — engravings of the “Early Christian Martyr” school, cardboard mottoes and one or two gaudy lithographs. No one valued the latter very highly but something colorful was needed to give tone to the room and offset the depressing effect of the engravings.

Only a very observing guest paid any attention to the prints or noted in small script the names “Currier and Ives.” Meaningless words! No one dreamed, not even Nathaniel Currier or William Merritt Ives, that a time would come when these self-same crudities would bring fabulous prices. Had any one possessed

prophetic vision, what fortunes might have been laid! As it was, the landscapes, clipper ships, hunting scenes, cottage groups, rural celebrations, naval battles, historic landmarks and numerous other subjects had their brief day of favor and gave way in time to chromos and other processes in color. Last of all to go were the sentimental damsels reading love letters, waving perpetual farewells, or playing on antiquated pianos "The Maiden's Prayer." Their vapid, flower-decked faces had almost as great a popularity as the cherubic children feeding birds, leading lambs or guiding the aged with such touching words as, "Lean on me, Grandpa."

Occasionally in the guest room of some old house which progress has passed by may be found one of these old favorites, timeworn and faded, but artless still. Their value as yet in the market place is not great, although no one can safely predict what Currier and Ives will or will not bring in the near future.

The ship prints, the old harbor views, the hunting, fishing and railroad subjects,

the naval engagements and other historic items lead in interest and usually in value. In great demand are the rural life series of which "May Morning", "Summer Evening", "October Afternoon" and "Pleasures of Winter" are good examples. Of like character are the well known "Home to Thanksgiving", "Old Plantation Home", "American Homestead" and a score of others more or less famous and expensive.

Once at a country auction on a rainy day the Thanksgiving print, together with a candle mold, a perforated lantern and a pink Staffordshire sugar bowl passed into my eager hands, for fifty cents. The lantern and candle mold were exchanged for a copper luster bowl, the Staffordshire given to a friend who owned a teapot of the same pattern, and the print, after an uneventful existence in a forgotten drawer, was accidentally destroyed one day with a lot of old papers. But the world is full of Thanksgiving pictures — if they could be located.

There is not a great deal of information at hand, but convenient dates to remember

are: 1835 Nathaniel Currier established at Number 1 Wall Street; 1850 Ives taken into partnership; 1880, after the death of Currier, the elder, a son continues in business with Ives; 1896 the date of the last print; names of artists who worked for the firm at various times — Ives, Cameron, Durrie, Maurer and Palmer; addresses found on prints, Nassau, Spruce, Wall and Fulton streets; high prices paid include "Clippers," ranging from one hundred to four hundred dollars, "Life of a Hunter — Tight Fix", six hundred and twenty-five, and "Home to Thanksgiving" eight hundred.

Among specialists are those who collect ship subjects as "Flying Cloud", "Great Republic", "Young America", "Comet", "Lightning", etc.; or hunting items, as "Home of the Deer", "Wild Duck Shooting", "Playing the Decoy", "Mink Trapping", "Off for the Woods", "Ruffed Grouse", "The Fox Chase", of which there are quantities to tempt enthusiasm and purse, or racing subjects, or early transportation, or western cities, or naval

heroes, or one national figure, as Abraham Lincoln. Inasmuch as the Civil War period was a prolific one in lithography, there are many Lincoln specimens, including, it must be said, some of the poorest in line and color.

My own preference turns to ships, with the hope that the unlisted U. S. *Constellation* may be secured. Several people have volunteered to find this old frigate but invariably locate the *Constitution*. Interesting as the *Constitution* is, it is not the *Constellation*. Quite recently these old vessels, so intimately associated with our early naval history, have been painted by Charles R. Patterson, and the *Constitution* has been reproduced in color for use in the public schools. Perhaps as kindly a fate will overtake the *Constellation*, so if I may not own a Currier, I may possess a Patterson. Very spirited is the rendering of both ships and of a beauty unknown to our New York lithographers. Just now sailing vessels of all kinds are on the top wave of popularity. And the collector of ships, whether models, prints, or paint-

ings, will find no difficulty in securing many specimens. In ship models alone an extensive and costly collection may be assembled.

As with all fads, the bypaths are worth exploring, and old ship wall papers are among the most fascinating. Several delightful old patterns have been reproduced by Miss Harriet Bryant of New Milford, Connecticut, who has aided both the decorator and the antiquarian by her adventures in historic wall paper. One of her most notable achievements is the locating of the commemorative paper of the battle between the *Constitution* and the *Guerriere*, — lost more than a hundred years. On a background of exquisite blue are darker blue stars, medallions of Commodore Isaac Hull, hero of the occasion, and a very vigorous handling of the two ships. The portrait of Hull is wreathed in laurel surmounted by classic figures of victory and fame. It would be difficult to find a design with a greater patriotic appeal or a more decorative effect.

Another of Miss Bryant's nautical triumphs, reproduced from an old French

blocked paper, shows alternating ships and mills separated by quaint groupings of fruit. This charming design in soft greens, faint grays, white tracery and deep apricot covers the walls of my guest room and has proved a source of interest to many visitors. Moreover, it is very pleasant to live with day after day. The "Ship and Mill" may be secured in several different color schemes, and in its most cheerful guise, mulberry combined with Naples yellow.

On my desk, as I write, lies the following advertisement, or possibly "inducement" is a better word. It is full of lure for the builder of a ship collection, and the owner lives down Salem way: Offered in Ship prints — "Great Republic", "Three Brothers", "Witch of the Wave", "Red Jacket", pair "Outward and Homeward Bound", "Burning of Golden Light", "Off Sandy Hook in a Snow Storm", Yacht "Volunteer", Frigate, "Independence", "Perry's Victory on Lake Erie", "The Sperm Whale in a Flurry", "Capturing the Whale."

Commodore Perry is popular with print collectors. A rare set, relating to his Japanese expedition, published by E. Brown, Jr., Fulton Street, New York, is in great demand at present. The dispatch box used by Perry while in Japan and later given to Joseph Francis of lifeboat fame and by his heirs to Miss Maria Scott of Chicago, was for many years one of my most treasured possessions — and would be still, but for a warehouse fire which destroyed many valuables. The only balm for such losses is to go on collecting with even greater activity in an entirely different field. And if you like the latest fad of the moment, arm yourself with that indispensable and timely volume by Warren A. Weaver, "The Lithographs of N. Currier and Currier and Ives", and start forth on a pilgrimage. The pastime will prove diverting and possibly profitable. Other print makers will be encountered, and England and France will be drawn into the pursuit. Nor will the nineteenth century cover the hobby. Time and place will be confined to no one country or century.

As for prices, one collector declares there is no limit but the sky, and another that some of his best specimens have cost relatively very little. With Currier and Ives it is safe to predict that values will be on the increase for some time to come, with the inevitable drop. "Speculation", "long-time investment" and the "pleasures of ownership" are terms heard in connection with Currier and Ives, which sound like a transaction in real estate, and, in truth, there is similarity between the two, with perhaps the balance in favor of the prints as a safe venture, if selection be very wise.

Whether Currier and Ives have a lasting hold on the collecting public time will show. Many of the prints are poor in drawing, weak in color and crudely executed. There is, of course, a great difference in workmanship and technique. The earlier the better, from the standpoint of attractiveness. Costumes, life and people were more picturesque when Nathaniel Currier began his work in 1835 than in the latter days of the enterprise. No decades gave

less of charm to the artist than the seventies and the eighties. Handicapped, indeed, were all makers of pictures, whether the medium were paint and canvas, the engraver's steel plate, the woodcutter's block or the lithographer's stone. Even greater were the difficulties in the path of the sculptor. Who can say what Rogers might not have accomplished in another period and with a better medium? As it was, he conveyed a sense of reality — sometimes with humor, sometimes with pathos, but always with a popular appeal. Sometimes the composition of the large groups was well handled and certain faces, even to-day, show skillful characterization. Let us give Rogers his due, but let us leave the collecting of his groups to a future century. We do not need them as human documents and that is their sole claim to interest.

The psychology of the Currier and Ives rage is quite simple. The prints presented something new, something unhackneyed. They could be located in sufficient quantities to make the search of importance to dealers, and no fad looms large without

the assistance of the professional collector. Certain subjects were scarce enough to be proclaimed rare and to promote keen rivalry. The demand for such created the inevitable supply. For surplus prints an interest has been skillfully created. Once fully launched, the scheme traveled by its own momentum. The possibilities are tremendous. More than three thousand listed subjects, and hundreds of duplicates originally printed! No wonder collectors wax enthusiastic and no wonder prices change over night. "It is a great pastime," says one man who has forsaken old English pink coats and Japanese first editions, "but do not bring Art in." So much for one opinion. Another who follows periods rather than subjects, making 1845 the dividing line and not even recognizing Ives, considers his early Curriers worthy a place with contemporary English and French examples. Portfolios of various sizes take care of a large collection. He says his old prints do not deserve hanging, whatever he may mean by that.

The portfolio plan is better than cover-

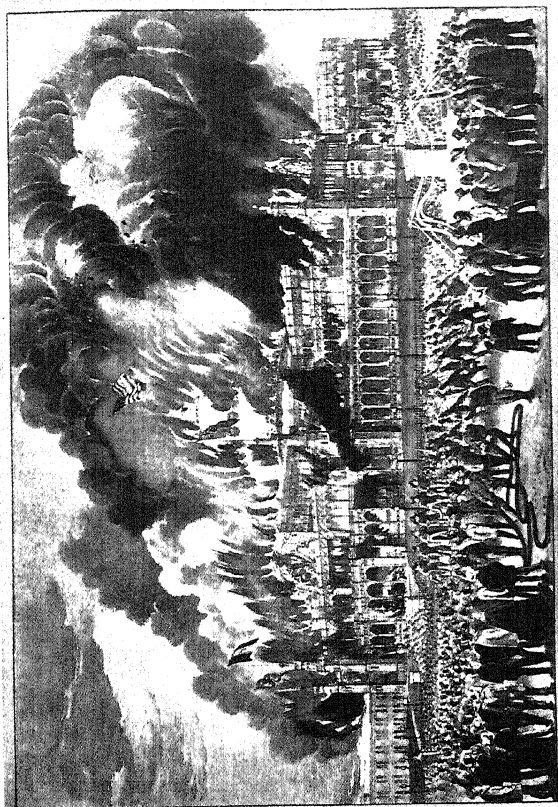
ing the walls of a room, although the charm of a few old specimens in original frames is considerable. But they must be used with a decorator's feeling for the right thing in the right place. Shallow built-in drawers sometimes solve the problem. For Japanese prints, etchings, old mezzotints and other choice specimens which must be protected from light, dust and air, such an arrangement is admirable. Card catalogues aid in locating subjects and for the highly methodical such schemes leave little to be desired. Others turn to hobbies for relaxation and avoid the system of a well-organized business office.

Among rare Curriers may be mentioned "U. S. Ship North Carolina", 1844, with distant view north from Castle Garden; "New York from Weehawken", 1848, bearing the lettering: "Lith. & Pub. by N. Currier, 152 Nassau St., Cor. of Spruce, N. Y."; a similar view, dated one year later, drawn by Palmer (Mrs. Palmer, it is said); "New York from Jersey City", same date, and "New York", 1856, "Sketched and Drawn on Stone by C.

Parsons." There is a beauty of line and color in these old Manhattan subjects, faintly recalling such famous aquatints as "New York from Brooklyn Heights", painted by J. W. Hill, engraved by W. J. Bennett, and published and copyrighted by Lewis P. Clover, or the very rare "View of the Spot Where General Hamilton Fell at Weehawken", painted by J. Ward and engraved by C. Ward. Early and scarce Curriers are "Astor Place Riot", 1849; "Battery by Moonlight", 1850; "First Appearance of Jenny Lind in America", 1850, and "Crystal Palace."

Very desirable are the New York prints of the early Currier and Ives period, notably "Burning of the Crystal Palace", "Upper and Lower Bay", "Blackwell's Island" and "Burning of City Hall."

Conflagrations had a special interest for American print makers. Fires were numerous and formed a popular and colorful theme. Several of these subjects are extremely valuable, particularly first impressions. As with an etching, "proof before letters" adds to the prestige.



Lithograph. Currier and Ives, 152 Nassau St., New York City

“BURNING OF THE CRYSTAL PALACE. TUESDAY, OCT. 6, 1858”

Famous names found in the quest for prints are Wood and Rollinson; W. Birch; David Longworth; Henry I. Megarey; William G. Wall, painter and publisher; L. P. Clover; Bailey, Ward and Company; William A. Colman — sometimes jointly used with the famous Ackermann of London; E. Brown, Jr., also E. Brown, Jr. and E. W. Foreman; Sarony; Sarony and Major; J. Bachman; D. and J. McLellan; Smith, Fern, and Company; F. and G. W. Smith; George Degan; Otto Botticher; I. Rogers; Goupil and Company; H. R. Robinson; Kellogg; Kellogg and Thayer.

Browsing for New York prints brings to light the work of many men now slowly coming into prominence, although it must be remembered that really fine New York views have had for years a devoted following. Also, for over a long period a small group has made a specialty of Curriers and early Currier and Ives. The collection of Percy Pyne, 2d is a notable example.

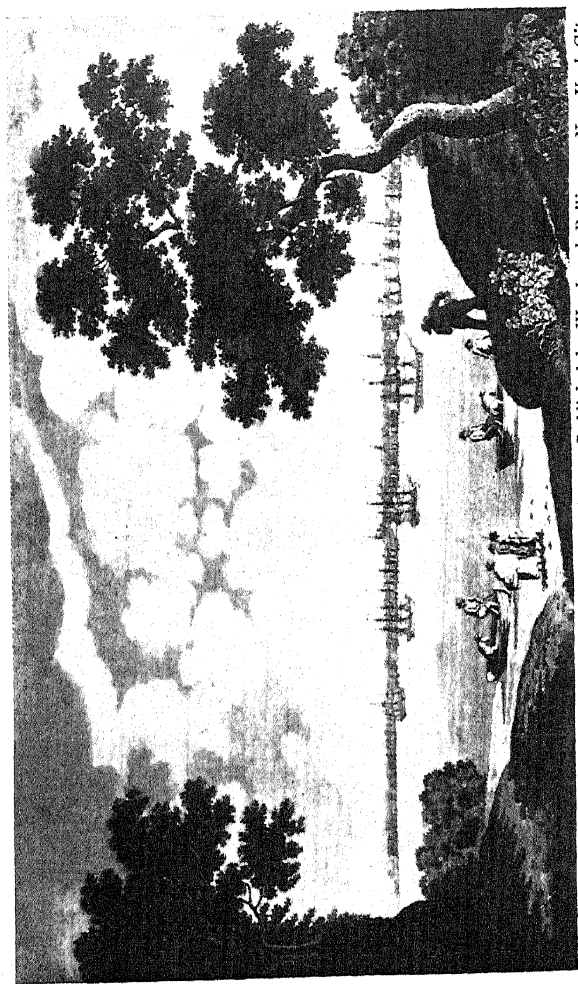
Reminiscent of coaching days in England are the names of such artists as Shayer, Henderson, Harrington Bird, J. F. Herring,

and even that master of caricature, Cruikshank.

Appropriately framed and carefully hung, a few old prints add a delightful quality, and if we turn to English subjects for technique and color, we are merely blending the decorator with the collector. Many early American subjects are tremendously effective — no one would deny it for a moment — but they are seldom found on the main highway of print collecting. It is much easier to find contemporary English work.

A curious book published in 1838 bears the alliterative title: "Jorrock's Jaunts and Jollities, or the Hunting, Shooting, Racing, Driving, Sailing, Eating and other Eccentric and Extravagant Exploits of that Renowned Sporting Citizen, Mr. John Jorrock of St. Botolph Lane and Great Coram St."

A partial list of the subjects dealing with the jovial Jorrock, who could not see a red coat without having scarlet fever, include "Surrey Shooting — Mr. Jorrock in Trouble"; "The Turf — Mr. Jorrock at Newmarket"; "Mr. Jorrock and the



Drawn by John Wood. Engraved by W. Rollinson. Published by Wood and Rollinson, New York City
AQUATINT. "NEW YORK FROM LONG ISLAND, 1801"

Surrey Stag Hounds"; and "Sporting in France." A hunt breakfast, not illustrated, but so convincingly described that a highly colored picture is presented to the reader, sets forth pyramids of muffins, mountains of cheese, pork pies, veal pies, kidneys, chops, beef puddings and oceans of tea.

So popular was the jocular Jorrocks that his exploits, first chronicled in the *New Sporting Magazine*, found an echo in this country. The American edition was published by E. L. Carey and A. Hart of Philadelphia.

One paragraph and one only must be quoted:

And thou, Goddess of the Silver Bow — chaste Diana, deign to become the leading star of our lubrications; come perch upon our grey goose quill, shout in our ear the maddening "Tally-ho!" and ever and anon give a salutary refresher to our memory with the heaven wrought spurs old Vulcan forged when in his maddest mood, whilst we relate such feats of town-born men and country squires as shall harrow souls and fright the grass-galloping garrons from their propriety. But gently, Pegasus! and so on for two hundred pages.

Keen rivalry has long existed over the Henry Alken colored plates of "British Sports" published in 1821 by Thomas McLean. A fine set recently offered in London included "Hawking", "Stag Hunting", "Fox Hunting", "Coursing", "Grouse and Partridge Shooting", "Salmon Fishing", "Cock Fighting", "Owling", etc. Inasmuch as there are fifty prints in this series, the price of nine hundred dollars seems very reasonable if comparison is made with the now expensive Currier and Ives, and there is, of course, no comparison in charm and workmanship. Also very rare are the subjects comprising the "Sporting Repository" by Alken, published by McLean a year later. Nineteen aquatints representing "Archery", "Trotting and Tandem", "Shooting", "Cocking", "Pedestrianism", "Pugilism", etc., form a fascinating collection offered to the print collector for half the price of the larger portfolio.

Sometimes Alkens are found in this country in unexpected places, although no place is really unexpected to the dyed-in-

the-wool collector. Looking for peasant pottery one morning in a delightful gift shop, "The Brush and Needle" in historic Charlottesville, Virginia, I unearthed "Coaching by Moonlight" and the "Royal Mail Coach Leaving the Postoffice." While the frames are new, the prints are original and in excellent condition. Particularly gay in costume and feeling is the "Royal Mail."

Probably the famous "London Cries" will first come to mind when English prints are mentioned. No other series is quite so celebrated as this baker's dozen, painted by F. Wheatley and engraved by J. Gauguain and reproduced over and over.

My one "Cry", cut from an old number of the *Connoisseur*, is the well-known "Turnips and Carrots." An original of the more charming "Sweet Oranges" was given as a wedding present some years ago to a young couple just beginning a collection of the "Cries." Speaking of the *Connoisseur*, a fine opportunity for study is presented in its pages. To own the back numbers of this magazine is to have a pic-

torial history of the graphic arts of England and of France. And even more valuable to the American collector is our own publication, *Antiques*. Not one issue should be missed of this authoritative, readable, human and altogether delightful monthly.

And speaking of turnips, a print seen in my childhood and now a perfect blank except for the lettering, bore this legend: "If a man who turnips cries, cries not when his father dies, 'Tis a proof he'd rather have a turnip than a father." It was not Wheatley, I am very sure; neither was it engraved by Raphael Smith, the Wards nor Valentine Green; no, not after "Morland" — but after whom, and by whom?

Of English prints, Baxters are at present in great vogue. They show greater technical skill, and a higher artistic excellence than contemporary American work, but have not escaped the ridicule heaped on most mid-nineteenth-century things. The subjects number less than four hundred, but were printed in great quantities and may be found by the dozens. As with

Currier and Ives, there is a vast difference in excellence, and the mere fact that a print is a Baxter is not a sufficient guarantee of worth, or charm.

George Lewis Baxter was originally an engraver, but a color invention of his own enabled him to use wood blocks over an engraved outline, obtaining a wide range of tones and, sometimes, as in landscapes and flower arrangements, a rich and velvety texture. Baxter used oil paints and proved his claim to a unique process. As with artists on this side of the Atlantic he was hampered by the florid tastes of the day. Some of his titles read like a Currier and Ives list: "News from Home", "Little Runaway", "The Lovers' Letter Box", "So Nice", "So Nasty" — the latter purely British — "The Soldier's Farewell", "Morning Prayer", "Childhood's Dream", "He Cometh Not", "Home for Christmas."

Baxter portraits, as "Victoria", "The Prince Consort", "Jenny Lind", "Empress Eugenie", "Lord Nelson" and "Napoleon" have tempted many collectors and in one

or two instances the forger as well. Doubtful prints should be placed under a magnifying glass, when the difference between old and new methods will be revealed.

Some of the prices paid for rare Baxters outdistance the most desirable Currier and Ives. A few seasons ago the pair of celebrated "Chubbs", "Thomas" and "Marion" — truly not romantic titles — sold in London for three thousand dollars. And George Baxter died a bankrupt!

LeBlond, who is now remembered by the collector, obtained Baxter's patent, but never used the process with the skill of the inventor. Still, there are interesting LeBlonds, and it is for each print enthusiast to decide what particular form his pastime shall take. If you believe in collector's luck — and who does not — follow the first lead, but do not let interest end there. To confine all one's efforts to Currier and Ives, or to Baxter is like specializing on dessert at dinner and leaving out the zest of the salad.

Old costume prints offer an engaging field — whether rare Benjamin Wests or

familiar Godeys. And to speak of French prints is to open the doors of long corridors leading to such delightful things that "Home to Thanksgiving" and "The Soldier's Farewell" are not even remembered.

But whatever the final verdict of the now very popular American lithographers may be, we can never forget that for more than a half century they mirrored American life.

CHAPTER XX

THE ROMANCE OF GLASS

It is not easy to predict the future of glass collecting in this country. Collectors are less loyal or, perhaps, merely less fixed in their attitude toward glass than toward china. The Sandwich man of last year may be the Waterford enthusiast of to-day; or, if he play Americana only, the Wistarberg collector of to-morrow. And he may have forgotten both in his interest in some obscure "glass house" now but a memory. Whatever his temporary moorings, he will probably admit that with early Sandwich and authentic Stiegel and Wistarberg, no collector can go far astray. The beauties of Waterford and Bristol may appeal to his esthetic taste, but somewhere lurks a great pride in what our own craftsmen have accomplished.

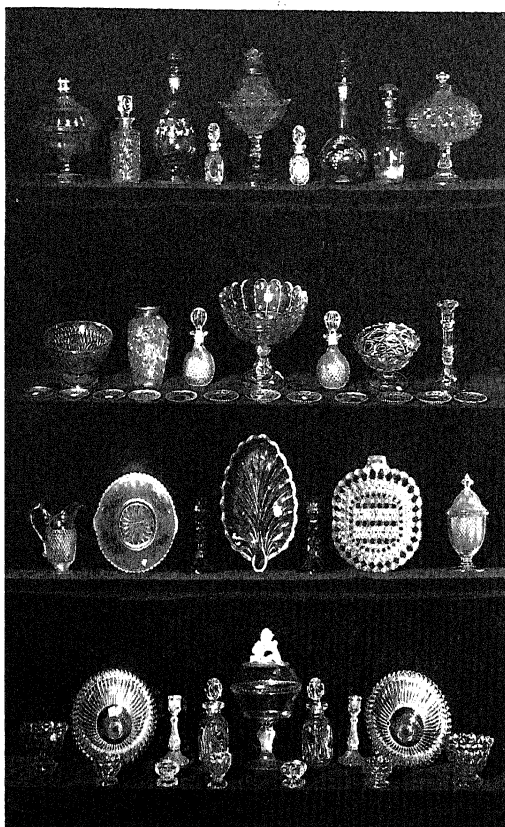
Sandwich glass will always be more or less a contention, and its keenest admirers cannot claim for it a place with American glass of the eighteenth century, nor equality with the finest English and Irish specimens. That it was so long neglected gave to its tardy pursuit an added zest and with true American exaggeration "Sandwich and Sandwich only" became the cry of the moment. For the time being Stiegel was neglected, "South Jersey" overlooked and European glass forgotten. Stiegel was the product of an eccentric foreigner! Wistarberg smacked of overseas! But Sandwich, Simon-pure American — a true domestic product. Even so; early Sandwich is well worth seeking. It should be collected with almost as much zeal as our early silver, but sharp lines should be drawn and the later deluge avoided. There is so much of the florid; so comparatively little of the really fine.

July fourth, 1825, marked the opening day of the Glass House at Sandwich, Massachusetts, founded by Deming Jarves, and January second, 1888, the closing

date of the industry. The first and second periods have much to offer the lover of old glass; the final twenty years show the decadence in form and decoration which overtook the minor arts at home and abroad.

In a certain cupboard is an array of Sandwich glass made to commemorate the Centennial of 1876, and displaying the Liberty Bell and various buildings at Philadelphia. It marks the beginning of the end of Sandwich, — yet at the time completely expressed the tastes of the day. The collector will turn from these ornate articles to early “lace”, to “snakeskin”, to “loops” and “lobes”, and the many variations of bands, borders, foliations, stars, diamonds and hearts which make up the fine tableware produced at the Cape Cod factory, first called “The Sandwich Manufacturing Company” and a year later incorporated under the name of “The Boston and Sandwich Glass Company.”

The invention of pressed glass has long been attributed to Sandwich, and the date placed at 1827, but the honor has not gone unchallenged. To the New England Glass



Buckley Collection, Binghamton, N. Y.

SANDWICH GLASS

Company of Cambridge, Massachusetts, credit has also been given, and several well-known authorities hold tenaciously to this theory.

Mrs. Emma Carleton of New Albany, Indiana, one of the pioneer collectors of the Middle West, who did much to develop a love for beautiful old things in her community, devoted years of study to American glassware. More than twenty years ago she wrote :

Crude forms in molded glass were made in this country during the first quarter of the nineteenth century, but in 1826 Mr. Enoch Robinson of the New England Glass Company took out letters patent for the invention of a process by which furniture-knobs, door handles, etc., were to be made of pressed glass. The validity and originality of this patent were fully tested in a closely contested lawsuit in Philadelphia carried on against powerful firms of glass makers in Pittsburgh. The first glass salt-stands were molded by Mr. Robinson in 1827.

Mrs. Carleton calls attention to the fact that American glassware made a distinct impression in England at the great exhibi-

tion of national industries held in the Crystal Palace in 1851, by reason of its brilliancy, and that even when crude in form, the color was pronounced of great beauty.

Old bottles were Mrs. Carleton's specialty, and her collecting paralleled that of Edwin Atlee Barber, whose book on the subject long held first place in her working library. Now the authentic volume, "Early American Bottles and Flasks" by Stephen Van Rensselaer, comes as the latest word in the field of what may be termed glass literature.

Whether to Sandwich belongs the glory of inventing pressed glass, to Sandwich belongs the prestige of giving it charm and vitality, and the name of the Cape Cod Company will always be linked with this type. What more need partisans ask? An excellent paragraph for the collector's memorandum, compiled from Priscilla C. Crane's investigation in the town of Sandwich and published in *Antiques* during the anniversary year of 1925, gives these presumable dates:

No *lace* glass after 1840; *colored* first made in the thirties; *snakeskin* about 1860; *hobnail* in the decade following the Civil War; *cable* glass at the time of laying the French cable in 1867; *opaque* after the Civil War; first *diamond* cutting made and designed by "Gaffer" Cook; so-called "*Grant*" pattern at the time of Grant's candidacy for President; *opal* glass first introduced in America by the Sandwich Company and made by Rice Harris, an Englishman, who came to this country for that purpose.

Several snakeskin pieces owned in my own family and received as wedding presents lead me to think that as early as 1857 this well-known pattern may have been attempted. "Sandwich lace" will make the greater appeal on account of its delicacy, brilliancy and greater age. To those who find blown glass the real desideratum, rival claims of pressed will not be taken very seriously, for to them pressed glass is only pressed glass. There is a charm, a witchery, a miracle about a fragile bubble perpetuated in solid form that the choicest

pressed cannot approach. Fortunately, the subject may be approached from many angles.

Cup plates naturally come to mind when Sandwich is mentioned and many collections are built around this one particular item. The finest display which has come to my notice is that of Mr. Walter B. Brockway of Portland, Maine, shown from time to time at the rooms of the Historical Society of that city. Arranged in orderly rows on black velvet in a big case made for the purpose, and so placed that each small disc seems to catch and hold the light, the Brockway collection will be a revelation to those who have never paid much attention to the "cup plate" cult. Most of the rare historical plates are represented and all of the conventional patterns. It lacks, or did at one time, the scarce "Henry Clay" with face turned to the right instead of to the left. This much-coveted trifle, believed at one time to be a myth, but now generally conceded a workman's blunder in reversing the die, and consequently existing in limited numbers

only, has caused much excitement, bitter disappointment and, it must be confessed, loss of faith — not in glass, but in human nature.

Cup plates have never been one of my hobbies. Tremendously interesting, of course, but we all have to live on Arnold Bennett's twenty-four hours a day. But letters about every old thing under the sun fill my rural mail box and the praises of cup plates have often been sung. Twice I have been offered the "Henry Clay" right about; the first time for two hundred dollars and the second for fifty. And only the other day "Henry Clay" cropped up again in a letter devoted largely to Currier and Ives. The writer knew where the rarest prints and plates were hidden away, including the right Mr. Clay, but all clues followed so far have led to the wrong one.

Mrs. Williams's book is indispensable to the collector of Sandwich — so valuable, indeed, that to lend it is to say good-by to it for a long time. ' It contains volumes in a nut shell and arranged most conveniently.

Antiques and the *Antiquarian* are important aids in the quest. In fact, the well-filled book and magazine shelf now elbows the corner cupboard.

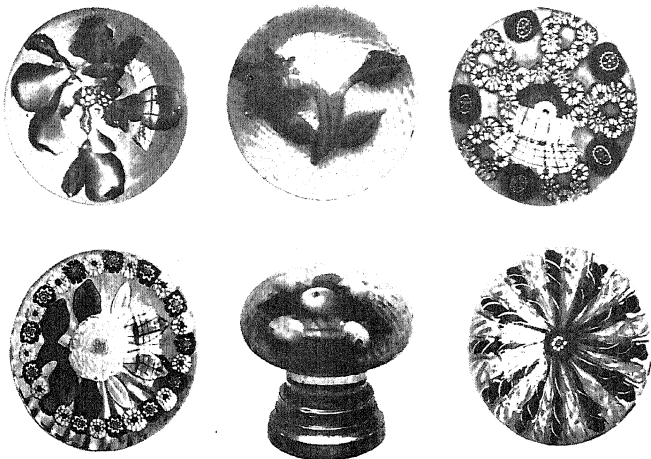
Once when I recommended a well-known book on rugs to a friend who had sought my advice on the subject, she replied: "Pay ten dollars for a rug book! Why, nothing will be left to buy rugs with!" So buy the glass and then the book, if you know your subject well; but if in doubt, turn to Barber, Moore, Carrick, Hunter, Williams, Powell, Van Rennselaer and other gallants of the printed page, and buy before the books advance in price, for, like the lovely old things they describe, values increase rapidly. "Stiegel Glass" by Frederick William Hunter is now quoted at seventy-five dollars, a very high figure on first thought, yet many a specialist would gladly purchase a copy, so important to the Stiegel collector is this scholarly work. Mr. Hunter's researches covered years, and if he robs the "Baron" William Henry Stiegel of romantic laurèls, he places incontestable facts before his readers. Mr. Hun-

ter foresaw the rise of Wistarberg, predicting a future equal to that of Stiegel, and this prophecy has proved a true one.

In 1736, thirty years before the Manheim industry in Pennsylvania was founded by Stiegel, Caspar Wistar, a substantial citizen of Philadelphia, opened a small glass factory in Southern Jersey near the village of Alloway. Importing workmen from the Low Countries, he set a standard of excellence which later craftsmen had difficulty in surpassing. His son Richard developed a striking color treatment, suggesting a ribboned or watered effect, technically termed "looped draggings" or "looped filaments", according to the method employed. Very pleasing are some of the combinations, particularly in pitchers when opaque draggings are shown on a transparent foundation. Wistarberg of the best periods has marked individuality — not so fine technically as Stiegel, but full of charm and sometimes of unrivaled color.

At the time that the Frederick William Hunter collection was sold at the American

Art Galleries in 1920, both Stiegel and Wistarberg brought high prices, the latter leading slightly, a circumstance full of significance to those who follow the rise and fall of auction values. An amber-colored pitcher, eight inches in height, decorated with white loopings, sold for one hundred and thirty dollars, a white flint flip glass decorated in high relief for two hundred and seventy, and a pair of dark blue pitchers with spiral filaments, height ten inches, for six hundred and eighty. These beautiful pitchers, establishing a new record in Wistarberg, if not in early American glass, had the characteristic ball covers for which this early factory was noted. In the Stiegel section of the sale, a *sucrier* of opaque body formed what our newspaper friends would call the outstanding feature, selling for four hundred dollars. Many pieces of the well-known Stiegel "diamond" or "quilt-ing" pattern, in blue, green and white flint, brought excellent, but not sensational prices. Milville afforded one of the surprises and brought to wide notice the fantastic articles made at this South Jersey



Collection of Mr. Ross Hall Maynard, Boston. Copyright by Ross Hall Maynard

MILLEFLEUR PAPER WEIGHTS



Collection of Miss Helen Temple Cooke, Wellesley, Mass.

A GROUP OF STIEGEL FLINT GLASS, WHITE, GREEN AND BLUE

glass house in the early years of the nineteenth century. Hats, canes, birds, and other toys sold at relatively big figures. Mr. Hunter's name naturally carried an interesting and important guarantee of worth and genuineness.

The Ross Maynard collection of Stiegel, which passed to Miss Helen Temple Cooke in 1917 and later to another collector, holds, I believe, the record for the highest average, piece by piece. Values, however, quickly increase, and what to-day is exorbitant, to-morrow seems fairly reasonable, and next week a positive bargain; so, after all, no figure may be regarded as final, although indicative of the collecting trend of the moment.

Sometimes auctions upset all theories, as when the Williamson sale came under the hammer in 1916. On my catalogue shelf, which is the longest in my library, and one of the most valuable, the Frederick Hunter and the Frederick Williamson and the Pleasant Hunter sales records stand side by side. Some of the Williamson items afford food for thought. Two Stiegel flip

glasses, four inches high, five dollars; pair Stiegel white flint cruets with stoppers, Hunter '77, six dollars each; Stiegel creamer quilted design, ten dollars; Washington and Taylor bottle, Barber 11, two dollars; four cup plates — Log Cabin, Henry Clay, Eagle and Bunker Hill — one dollar each; pair blue posy-holders, three dollars each; pair bottles, Barber 46 and 76, one dollar; pair amber quilted inkwells, Stoddard, New Hampshire, seven dollars. And absent collectors of old glass fairly wept, and with excellent reason, for on such occasions neither philosophy nor religion offers much consolation.

Doctor Pleasant Hunter of Newark, New Jersey, who has done much to promote and stimulate the finer side of collecting, early made a point of old glass, although pre-eminently a connoisseur of rare china. His three notable collections, sold respectively in 1913, 1915 and 1920, reflected the tastes and tendencies of the hour, and formed a helpful and very interesting basis of comparison. In 1913, the decorated opaque, then catalogued as "Bristol",

created the keenest discussion among lovers of old glass. It was a greater novelty than in 1915, when a larger number of pieces were assembled. It is worthy of note that at the second sale, when fifty or more charming examples were shown, they were catalogued merely as "Milk-white Glass."

Stiegel, Sandwich and other American types were shown in a limited way, but no Wistarberg, at least not so classified. English specimens led in interest, with fine Bohemian second. In 1920 America had come into her own and Sandwich, Stiegel and Wistarberg were splendidly represented.

The note on Wistarberg for Doctor Hunter's third catalogue, written by J. B. Kerfoot, is so helpful that I venture to quote here, at the same time expressing my thanks to both writer and collector, or to both collectors, for Mr. Kerfoot is a distinguished one, and a leading authority on pewter. Following a reference to the founding of the factory by Caspar Wistar, Mr. Kerfoot says :

In 1775 another factory was started at what is now Glassboro by two of Wistar's workmen. Between that date and the early 1840's a great number of factories — small and short-lived for the most part — were started throughout this section and along the Mullipa River; most of them established by Wistar workmen or their descendants and all of them manned by workmen trained in the Wistar tradition and technique. . . . Under this tradition the right to use the fag end of each pot of molten glass for their individual purposes was a recognized perquisite of the workmen. And, as a matter of fact, three generations of these workmen continued for more than one hundred years to make for themselves and their friends the same range of pieces unaltered in form and undistinguishable in technique. So that, so far as concerns these wholly true-to-tradition specimens, the attempted differentiation between "true Wistarberg" pieces and "South Jersey" pieces is utterly futile and meaningless. But, call them what we will and date them as we choose, their rarity remains the same. About 1850 a complete change of fashion seems to have taken place, under the influence of which the earlier forms more or less wholly disappeared.

With the rise of Wistarberg, interest has

inevitably waned in many of the old favorites, notably Bohemian. Millefleur continues in popularity but the fact that it is skillfully reproduced raises a perpetual question in regard to many interesting specimens. Paper weights and door knobs show this fanciful type at its best, well expressing the old name — “glass of a thousand flowers.” Very brilliant are many of these attractive trifles and fully justify the enthusiasm of a large group of collectors.

Undisturbed by fads for Americana are a few individuals who devote their energies to Nailsea, Derby-Spar and the better known English and Irish varieties. Derby-Spar is very scarce and its appearance in shop or auction room is an event.

Americans in London should not fail to visit White Friars, rich in associations of the past and teeming with traditions of early glass making. These traditions are carried on with distinction by the firm of Powell and Sons, whose beautiful glassware will be collected in the future as old White Friars is now eagerly sought. Blown, cut, engraved and colored, and

particularly "straw opal" are features of this twentieth-century industry.

Mr. Harry Powell, in a paper read before the Society of Arts of London, dated the early glass house before the end of the seventeenth century, and quoted an advertisement in the *London Tattler* of 1710 showing that the factory was then well established.

At the Flint Glass House in White Fryars near the temple are made and sold by wholesale and retail, all sorts of Decanters, Drinking Glasses, Crewitts, etc., or Glasses made to any pattern of the best Flint as also of common drinking glasses and other things made in ordinary Flint Glass at reasonable Rates.

If I went in largely for glass, Waterford would be my first choice, regardless of the ebb and flow of fads, Wistarberg second, Stiegel third, Bristol fourth, Sandwich fifth, Bohemian sixth and "Jacobite" seventh. Then for the joy of color I would gather in every lovely thing in amber, amethyst, blue, canary, "dregs of wine", emerald — a brilliant alphabet so far, and continue with turquoise, ruby,

deep yellow, mulberry, all the golden, glinting browns, coffee shades, "wet tea leaves", as the Chinese say of something quite different, and many other tones, tints, shades and hues. Decorated Stiegel — the rare enameled Stiegel — decorated Bristol if it be Bristol, and all the "milky", opaque, opalescent and alabaster things, would also find a place. When assembled on narrow shelves across a north window, even the dullest day would not lack life and sparkle. These gay bits might be vases, lamps, jugs or bottles, aristocrats or plebeians, but full of color they would have to be, — charming, vivacious, enchanting color. Such a grouping is not for cupboards, still less for cabinets, and you must be at least one-tenth decorator as well as nine-tenths collector, in order to feel the thrill and follow the lure.

CHAPTER XXI

OLD WALL PAPERS

CHINA is usually credited with the origin of wall paper, Italy and Holland with its introduction to Europe, France with its highest development, England with its greatest popularity, and America with the preservation of countless old designs.

Certain celebrated patterns are not to be found in the country of their birth. A possibility exists that they may be located in some old house in New England or the South, particularly New England, where climatic conditions were more favorable for the use of paper. In the wealthier Southern sections fashions in furnishings, as in clothes, changed frequently, and wall paper, if used, was not regarded as a life investment. Moreover, wood paneling had a deeper hold in Virginia, Georgia and

South Carolina than in the Northern Colonies.

Beautiful old papers have been found in many sections, but the seaports of New England offer the most interesting field. In frugal New England an imported paper once in place was apt to stay for years, gaining in interest and association, and becoming not only a part of the wall, but a part of life as well. If it remained until 1850, the chances were that it was not disturbed for at least a quarter century. After the Centennial, when the spirit of 1876 stalked abroad, many old papers disappeared. They were not in tune with the tastes of the day which decreed an entirely different order of furnishing. Bric-a-brac, knickknacks, gimcracks — call them as you will — did not “come out” well against the old designs. The bold decorative effects killed the ornamental gewgaws — and the gewgaws won. Eastlake appeared, then Morris, followed a little later by a reaction against all pattern which by slow degrees gave us the plain wall. But the pendulum of taste, never long station-

ary, gradually swung back to figured surfaces, arriving in time at the starting point — a highly decorative background. Now we diligently hunt the bold landscape, the striking bird and flower arrangement, the brilliant pictorial grouping. Once more the gay wall has its day. And the parlor ornaments are completely forgotten.

A strange fate has attended many of the old papers in New England and other Northern sections. Originally hung with a specially prepared paste, the secret of which has long been mislaid, the surface of the wall defied time and interference. The removal of the paper proved too great a task for the Mid-Victorian decorator who found repapering over the old hanging not only the line of least resistance, but the only thing which the methods of the day made possible, unless it were the almost endless task of peeling inch by inch the walls of an entire room. Up went the Eastlake, or its crude imitation, over the old Chinese design, or the French interpretation of Chinese, or the English adaptation of the French translation, or possibly

an historic theme of a slightly later period, or an Empire grouping of the early nineteenth century. Whatever lovely old thing it might be, it was hidden, apparently forever. When another change in the decorative treatment of the room became necessary, paper number three covered paper number two, and so on, — sometimes unto the sixth and seventh layer. Gradually the original wall paper was forgotten. Even the householders were ignorant of their buried treasure.

Fortunately, in more than one instance discovery has been made through the gradual disintegration of the paste in the upper layers, revealing, on close examination, a hint of something worth while beneath. Sometimes, as in the old Warner house in Portsmouth described in Chapter X, painted figures of extraordinary character are discovered; or, as in the home of Kate Douglas Wiggin in Hollis, Maine, a landscape decoration of quaintest charm is brought to light, surprising the owners even more than the workmen. Exquisite designs have been unearthed under these circum-

stances, and doubtless future surprises are in store for other lucky mortals.

An interesting old house where I once spent my summers disclosed under three coverings of very commonplace papers, one of the earliest block-printed patterns of William Morris, — the well-known “Primroses and Periwinkles” on a dark olive-green background. The paper hanger used an air brush, removing the wet layers in short order, and obtaining unharmed a complete “repeat” of this rare Morris. Like many of his calling, he has a keen eye for good line and color and has added many interesting things to my portfolio of old papers. None of the fragments can be classed as “colonial”, none can be called “antique”, if we limit that elastic adjective to articles made prior to 1820, but as studies in design and taste they are valuable and illuminating. One of the good things is a variant of the well-known Sibley hanging of Salem, about 1850, in shades of glossy gray in diamond panels combined with royal blue.

Any one studying wall papers and secur-

ing, when possible, photographs of old specimens and such fragments as may be gathered up in the varying experiences that beset all collecting, will soon realize that half a dozen definite paths lead through the pleasant field of his hobby. There are, of course, many byways which wind to the far corners of the earth, but with six in view the plan of campaign is comparatively simple.

There are, first of all, the papers termed "old" and which are merely unfamiliar to this generation, often quaint and charming and worthy a place in the beginner's collection, or any collection if properly classified and not given undue importance. Many old houses have such on the walls or tucked away in rolls under the eaves of attics, or in staircase closets, — the latter apparently built for the special purpose of holding the discarded wall paper of the household. And there is always the possibility of something unusual being found where least expected. Hidden away in forgotten cubby-holes occasionally have been discovered wall papers of rarest design ;

ordered probably for a special place and never used. There is a thrill in the thought. A notable example of lost and found is the highly important "Constitution and Guerrière", used as the frontispiece of this book.

Among original papers secured by Miss Nancy McClelland may be mentioned Vernet's "Hunt", in *grisaille*; "The Lady of the Lake", in sepia; "Telemachus on the Island of Calypso", in color; and the famous "Voyage of Captain Cook to the South Seas." These very rare subjects show scenic wall paper in its highest phase.

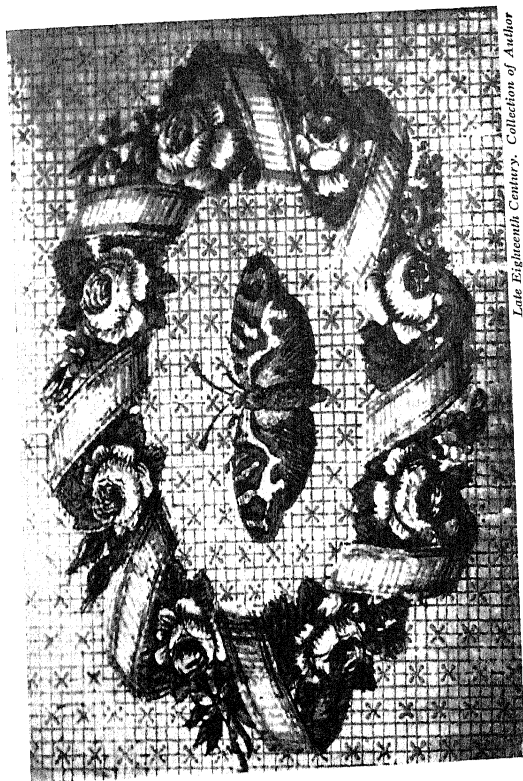
In the second division are the papers made about the middle of the nineteenth century, sometimes here, sometimes abroad, of which the Sibley is a familiar example through its admirable reproduction. Many patterns in diamonds, rectangular panels and other geometric arrangements, often with a central ornament, belong approximately to this date, although usually classed as much earlier. Designing of this period is extremely interesting, but rather confusing, as many earlier motifs were used. The Gothic revival in England

found an echo over here, extending to wall coverings, furniture and minor household articles. Wholly charming are the Gothic patterns, but it is a mistake to attribute them to Colonial times or to use as backgrounds for old mahogany. They blend admirably with black walnut, early horsehair pieces and the *lares* and *penates* of their day. As designs they are well balanced, finely proportioned and usually pleasing in color — cold color albeit, except for an occasional brilliant touch — cool grays and browns and that long-neglected color “drab”, which is not unattractive if properly enlivened. Halls were papered in these things, particularly that New England specialty — the front entry.

Not a hint have these Victorian specimens of the beauty, imagination and lure of the really old hangings, but they are so much better than the designs of the seventies, eighties and nineties, except with such masters as William Morris, Walter Crane, Shan Kydd and a few others, that they deserve more than passing attention. Parlor papers of the period blended neutral

color schemes with gold in embossed effects. Many such are in place to-day and no disintegration threatens to dislodge. Charm they have not, but a certain undeniable dignity, preferable to the nondescript, insipid schemes which a later taste demanded. Bedroom patterns of the 1850 era, which might with excellent reason have leaned to the quiet, usually displayed arsenic green, bright magenta, vivid orange or brilliant blue. Many of these gay hangings, admirable as to scale, have been reproduced for use in country houses. Especially interesting is the diamond trellis of which there are at least a dozen variations.

The third path carries us to the closing years of the great period of European designing when naturalistic themes slowly displaced the earlier and more classic treatments, but on big dignified lines. Several of the famous "Garden" papers date from this transition. Examples are more difficult to find than of the preceding period because America now depended more on her own resources, and less on foreign furnishings.



Late Eighteenth Century. Collection of Author

ITALIAN WALL PAPER IN SMALL SHEETS—BUTTERFLY
AND WREATH

Pursuing the fourth path we approach the great period of our importation of wall papers roughly spanned by 1780 and 1820 and largely of French origin. In path five we turn back to pre-Revolutionary days with less intercourse with France and more with England, and with the Orient via European ports, dating the starting point at approximately 1730. A good example of this far-away day is the Thomas Hancock paper described in Chapter IX.

In path sixth we wander to England, following fascinating highways to Spain, Holland, Italy and the Far East. There are few geographical boundaries to the hobby, once on European soil. Many of the byways will yield no fragments for portfolios, but the real student does not limit his interest to actual possession.

Museums offer much along the line of research and the subject in the past few years has been greatly extended by several notable books. "Historic Wall Papers" by Miss McClelland is a collection in itself and Miss Ackerman's smaller volume a helpful and delightful working guide.

Important facts for the memorandum culled from Sanborn, Ackerman, Northend, Jameson and others, and from personal delving and here given in note-book form include:

Printed papers mentioned in French court records as early as 1481; charter granted by Henry of Navarre to the Guild of Paper Hangers, 1599; oldest paper in place generally believed to be in Cambridge, England, dating from the early years of the sixteenth century, and imitating damask; reference to block-printed paper in Holland relating to one Schinkel of Delft, 1568; in the seventeenth century Chinese papers in small sheets carried to European ports by navigators, and possibly by that celebrated traveler, Marco Polo, at a much earlier date. The valuable Marco introduced to the Venetians cottons from India, silks from China, and there seems more than a probability that papers decorated by hand may have been a part of his cargo, but hardly of the "wall" type. Beautiful examples of Oriental block printing were in use in England by the middle of the

eighteenth century, occasional examples in this country, and many such when our own ships sailed the Chinese seas, although by the time our trade with the Orient was established, French and English papers were in use in New York, Boston, Philadelphia and other cities.

An early and authentic Chinese wall hanging is in the Captain Seth Macy house, Stockport, New York, printed on rice paper and depicting in gray and yellow, garden fêtes, water carnivals and religious ceremonies; a duplicate in the royal hunting lodge near Dresden; a paper almost as old, vividly described by Mrs. Humphry Ward in her novel "Marcella." The invention of flock papers, *papier velonte*, claimed by both Le François of Rouen and Jeremy Langer of England; Jean Papillon of Paris established the first great industry for printing in continuous pattern, originating luster effects and giving great prestige to French designing; Jackson of Battersea founded a paper house in 1746, publishing a book with small classic and architectural motifs a few years later. In 1735, land-

scapes and flower panels were made in France; in 1770 "Chinoiseries" were popular, embodying Chinese influence and French technique; about 1775 Reveillon launched a factory in Faubourg St. Antoine, destined to rank as one of the great achievements of eighteenth-century France; in 1797 the famous firm of Zuber opened its doors at Rixheim and, except during periods of war, has continued in business ever since; another historic house still making papers — Defosse and Karth of Paris.

With the opening of the nineteenth century, French and English firms increased in great numbers. When cylinders replaced blocks, about 1830, and wall papers could be made in quantities by machinery, the output became commercialized. From an art it grew to an industry and while beautiful designs continued to be printed, the golden age was drawing to a close.

To attempt even a fragmentary list of celebrated designs is outside the scope of my chapter. Many old French papers are well known through reproductions, notably

the "Life of Psyche" designed by Lafitte by order of the painter David and printed by Dufour. This series of panels with finely modeled figures and classic backgrounds shows the highest type of Empire draftsmanship. It also reflects the tastes of the day which turned to mythology for chief inspiration. Napoleon's campaigns furnished much material, both historical and geographical, and often the blending is saved from the incongruous merely by its artistic handling, and by that feeling for fitness which the French seem always to have had. No corner of the known globe was overlooked; no myth, no striking episode in history, no picturesque Bible story, no adventurous voyage, no classic ruin but what in one guise or another found expression in wall paper. The student, the collector, the decorator or the owner of the old house has a rich field to explore, and a hobby as many-sided as a twentieth-century diamond.

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